

**Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 17, 2016**  
**“Good Shepherd Sunday”**

**LUTHERAN**

**LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY**

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**At either “Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

April 14, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

*(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship midweek service at the home of Robert Russo, a Puritas Lutheran Church member. E-mail [puritaspastor@hotmail.com](mailto:puritaspastor@hotmail.com) for details.)*



<http://www.journeywithjesus.net/Essays/20100419JJ.shtml> A weekly commentary on the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) “The Journey with Jesus Foundation was founded in 2004 ... serve the global church through scholarship, teaching in third-world seminaries, consulting, and the promotion of Christian philanthropy.... Our mission vision is characterized by six values—biblical fidelity, cultural relevance, critical inquiry, pastoral sensitivity, global awareness, and ecumenical generosity.”

**Hymn of the Day**

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 709 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 431**

“The King of love my shepherd is”

**Baker, Sir Henry Williams**, Bart., eldest son of Admiral Sir Henry Loraine Baker, born in London, May 27, 1821, and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated, B.A. 1844, M.A. 1847. Taking Holy Orders in 1844, he became, in 1851, Vicar of Monkland, Herefordshire... Of his hymns four only are in the highest strains of jubilation, another four are bright and cheerful, and the remainder are very tender, but exceedingly plaintive, sometimes even to sadness. Even those which at first seem bright and cheerful have an undertone of plaintiveness, and leave a dreamy sadness upon the spirit of the singer. ..The last audible words which lingered on his dying lips were the third stanza of his exquisite rendering of the 23rd Psalm, "The King of Love, my Shepherd is:"—

Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,  
But yet in love He sought me,  
And on His Shoulder gently laid,  
And home, rejoicing, brought me."

--John Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology* (1907) [http://www.hymnary.org/person/Baker\\_Henry](http://www.hymnary.org/person/Baker_Henry)

The tune we use is "St. Columba" an Irish melody. "Dominus regit me" has a slightly more common usage.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sds1oHhFFSo> A simple piano verse of the hymn.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1C2Npaa24M> An organ version with some variations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iu83WQdQ7-Y> The other melody, as played at Princess Diana's funeral.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by  
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### **Acts 20:17-35, RCL; Acts 9:36-43 (Acts 11:1-18)**

*Acts 9:36-43 is the story of restoring Tabitha to life by Peter.*

#### **Paul Speaks to the Ephesian Elders**

<sup>17</sup> Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. <sup>18</sup> And when they came to him, he said to them:

“You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, <sup>19</sup> serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; <sup>20</sup> how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, <sup>21</sup> testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>22</sup> And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by<sup>[a]</sup> the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, <sup>23</sup> except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. <sup>24</sup> But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. <sup>25</sup> And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom

will see my face again. <sup>26</sup> Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, <sup>27</sup> for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. <sup>28</sup> Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, <sup>[b]</sup> which he obtained with his own blood. <sup>[c]</sup> <sup>29</sup> I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; <sup>30</sup> and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. <sup>31</sup> Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. <sup>32</sup> And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. <sup>33</sup> I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. <sup>34</sup> You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. <sup>35</sup> In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

- a. [Acts 20:22](#) Or *bound in*
- b. [Acts 20:28](#) Some manuscripts of *the Lord*
- c. [Acts 20:28](#) Or *with the blood of his Own*

**What do you say when you say goodbye?** When an apostle says farewell and addresses leaders of the next spiritual generation for what he thinks is the last time, a "farewell discourse" is in order. As Paul reviews his past as a model for the Ephesian elders' future work and charges them as Spirit-appointed pastoral overseers, we quickly become aware that Luke intends this message for all church leaders in every spiritual generation. Gathering the Elders (20:13-17)...

Paul consciously bypasses Ephesus, and Luke tells us why: he does not want to be slowed down on his way to Jerusalem, for he desires to arrive there, *if possible, by the day of Pentecost*. Though Jewish piety may motivate him (see Deut 16:16), a celebration of the Spirit's outpouring on the first Christian Pentecost is certainly reason enough (Acts 2:1-13). Still, Paul's pastor's heart overcomes his personal schedule. He cannot do without one last contact with the church in Asia. With earnestness and authority he summons the elders from Ephesus, thirty-odd miles away. An Apostle's Model Work (20:18-27)

In a reverse parallelism structure Paul reviews his past and anticipates his future (vv. 18-21, 22-24), and then in particular relation to the Ephesians he describes his future and makes an apologetic for his past conduct (v. 25, 26-27). He appeals to their personal experience--*you know*--as he points to his consistency during *the whole time* he was with them...

For Luke, orthopraxy--in this case the messenger's character and manner of ministry--is just as important as orthodoxy, the message. One effectively says goodbye by reminding those left behind of a model life lived before them...

Paul now relates his future prospects to the Ephesians: *None of you . . . will ever see me [literally, "my face"] again*. Again his ministry is in the forefront of his thought. These Ephesians are those *among whom [he has] gone about preaching [kerysso] the kingdom*...

Paul completes his exhortations to the elders with the charge to physically aid the weak. Using his own example and an otherwise unknown beatitude of the Lord, in a reverse parallelism he addresses both attitude and conduct concerning material things. The attitude is to say no to covetousness, as Paul among them did not desire *anyone's silver or gold or clothing* (precious metals, clothing and foodstuffs were the standard forms of wealth in ancient times; Josh 7:21; Mt 6:19; Jas 5:2). We must replace covetousness with liberality, knowing the truth of the Lord Jesus' declaration that the one whose disposition is "giving not receiving" (Mt 10:8) is blessed. Such an attitude will issue in a lifestyle of labor (*kopiao*, "toil which wears you out"), not for personal gain but in order to have something to *help the weak*, those who are incapable of work (Eph 4:28)...

<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/Acts/Jerusalem-Miletus> An extensive commentary on this reading. In addition to the theological points, the article begins with a background explanation of the actual travels that lead up to this "good bye".

## Psalm 23 (Psalm 148 )

### *A Psalm of David.*

23 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>3</sup> He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness<sup>[b]</sup>

for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,<sup>[c]</sup>

I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely<sup>[d]</sup> goodness and mercy<sup>[e]</sup> shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell<sup>[f]</sup> in the house of the LORD  
forever.<sup>[g]</sup>

- a. [Psalm 23:2](#) Hebrew *beside waters of rest*
- b. [Psalm 23:3](#) Or *in right paths*
- c. [Psalm 23:4](#) Or *the valley of deep darkness*
- d. [Psalm 23:6](#) Or *Only*
- e. [Psalm 23:6](#) Or *steadfast love*
- f. [Psalm 23:6](#) Or *shall return to dwell*
- g. [Psalm 23:6](#) Hebrew *for length of days*

*Expounded One Evening After Grace at the Dinner Table by Dr. Martin Luther 1536*

“In this psalm, David, together with every other Christian heart, praises and thanks God for His greatest blessing: namely, for the preaching of His dear Holy Word. Through it we are called, received, and numbered into the host which is God’s communion, or church, where alone—and nowhere else—we can find and have pure doctrine, the true knowledge of God, and the right worship of God.

Blessed David, however, lauds and magnifies this noble treasure most beautifully in delightful figurative and picturesque language and also in metaphorical expressions taken from the Old Testament worship of God...”

Read the rest of Luther’s comments at <http://gnesiolutheran.com/luther-on-psalm-23/>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqz7G\\_HNzyE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqz7G_HNzyE) Organ version as it appears in the LSB (710) Played at St. John's Lutheran Church, Princeton, Wisconsin by [Geoffrey Rue](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-qLa\\_2GPcM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-qLa_2GPcM) The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm sung to a different melody. [Citrail - WorshipGod2013](#)



**Revelation 7:9-17** (*Revelation 21:1-7, RCL does not include verse 7*)

### A Great Multitude from Every Nation

<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” <sup>11</sup> And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their

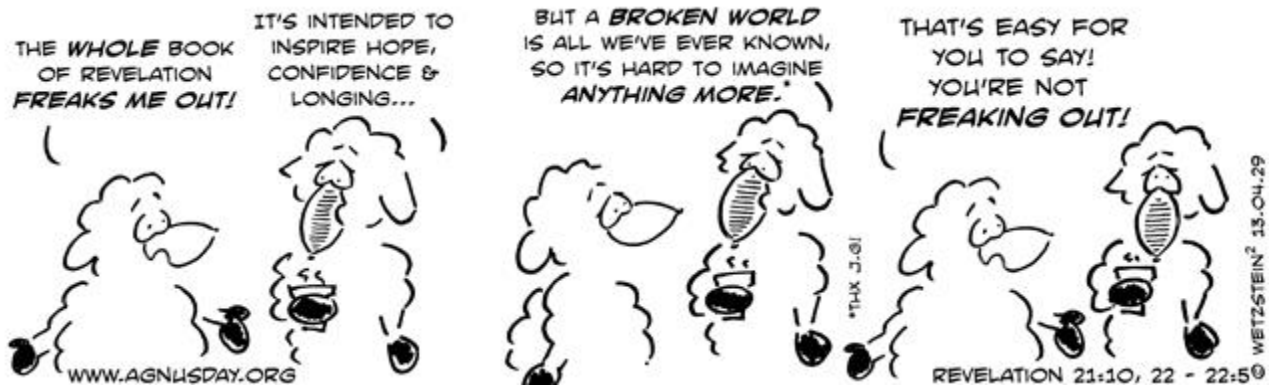
faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup> saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

<sup>13</sup> Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” <sup>14</sup> I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

<sup>15</sup> “Therefore they are before the throne of God,  
and serve him day and night in his temple;  
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.

<sup>16</sup> They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;  
the sun shall not strike them,  
nor any scorching heat.

<sup>17</sup> For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,  
and he will guide them to springs of living water,  
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”



“When Revelation 7:9-17 is read as an isolated unit, much of its meaning is lost.

To grasp the passage's fuller meaning we need to go to chapter 6, where the first six seals on the scroll are opened. After the sixth seal is opened (verse 12), the physical foundations of creation are rattled. Destruction reaches such a pitch that all people hide. Key is their question in 6:17. Now that the day of wrath has come, "Who is able to stand?"

When John the Seer reaches that point in his visions, he stops. The suffering and destruction of the first six seals are overwhelming, and so he introduces a break, a timeout that he uses to lift the vision of God's people from the difficulties of the present to the glories of the future. In 7:1-8, the angels of God seal the 144,000. The sealing, with a likely reference to baptism, sustains



the church on earth. The designation of twelve tribes times twelve thousand people per tribe envisions the church in this world as part of God's army in battle with the powers of evil. The opening vision of chapter 7, then, is of the church militant.

The fulcrum on which the passage balances is the difference between verse 4 and verse 9. In verse 4 John "heard the number." In verse 9 he "looked." What he sees is a vast international, multi-racial, multi-lingual throng of people so great that no one could count it. Although scholars differ in their understanding of how the people in 7:1-8 relate to the people in 7:9-17, I think that in the latter verses we have the church in heaven, or what we sometimes call the church triumphant.

John gives us a preview of the way things are to be...

With that vision in their minds and hearts, those who listen to the reading of Revelation are ready to experience the breaking of the seventh and final seal--which is followed immediately by the next cycle of seven end-time woes, that of the trumpets (8:1-2). They continue their journey through John's visions by having given thanks to the one who has saved them and who provides everything needed for life.

So who is able to stand? Those whom the Lamb has washed. With that word of encouragement, this persecuted minority--the first-century church--is able to move ahead, because they know where God is taking them. And today's believers know the same.

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=568](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=568) Walter F. Taylor, Jr., is the Ernest W. and Edith S. Ogram Professor of New Testament Studies and Director of Graduate Studies at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio. The detailed descriptions included in this commentary are worth reading. His commentary was also used for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter.

An additional resource is the sermon by Rev. Brian Kachelmeier of Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church in Los Alamos, New Mexico. "On this day we are given a lesson in counting..." Read the complete sermon at

<http://www.redeemerlosalamos.org/pages/AllSaints2010.html>



## “The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 12th Chapter”

### “Glory to You, O Lord”

**John 10:22-30** (*John 16:12-22 or 13:31-35, RCL uses the second choice*)

#### I and the Father Are One

<sup>22</sup> At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter,  
<sup>23</sup> and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. <sup>24</sup> So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” <sup>25</sup> Jesus answered them, “**I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me,** <sup>26</sup> **but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.** <sup>27</sup> **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.** <sup>28</sup> **I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.** <sup>29</sup> **My Father, who has given them to me,<sup>[a]</sup> is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.** <sup>30</sup> **I and the Father are one.”**

- a. [John 10:29](#) Some manuscripts *What my Father has given to me*

"This simple creature [the sheep] has this special note among all animals, that it quickly hears the voice of the shepherd, follows no one else, depends entirely on him, and seeks help from him alone—cannot help itself, but is shut up to another's aid" [Luther in Stier\*].” [Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary](#)

\***Rudolf Ewald Stier** (17 March 1800 - 16 December 1862), was a German Protestant churchman and [mystic](#)... He published a new edition of [Martin Luther's](#) *Catechism* and a translation of the Bible based on that of Luther; but he is noted chiefly for his thoughtful, devotional and mystical commentary on the *Words of the Lord* ... [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolf\\_Ewald\\_Stier](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolf_Ewald_Stier)

### “This is the Gospel of the Lord”    “Praise to You, O Christ”



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