



Jones County Food Bank: To donate money, checks should be written to Jones County Community Food Bank and mailed to 105 Broadway Place, Anamosa IA 52205. Checks written to HACAP cannot be donated to the food bank! Julie Finn at HACAP is the only one working at this time. **They are in need of peanut butter, cereal or canned soup at this time.**

Wayne Zion has a page with Jones County Food Banks. <https://waynezion.org/>

Apostolic Assembly Church, food pickup times: Every 2nd and 4th Saturday 10AM-12PM Drive in, tell them number in your household, they will put bag in your vehicle.

Forks and Friends group will be providing packaged meals EVERY THURSDAY EVENING between 5 and 6 PM until further notice. Meals may be picked up at the East door (parking lot) of the Anamosa United Methodist Church.

Camperships are still available. Please email CYFM if you have any further questions or to inquire about a Campership for your child.
cyfmstpaulanamosa@gmail.com

If you want to be a little more intentional and traditional about the bread you use when breaking bread in your domestic church (home), try this recipe for unleavened bread.

COMMUNION BREAD RECIPE

1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
1/2 cup white flour
1/4 tsp salt
3/4 tsp baking soda
MIX THESE TOGETHER...THEN ADD:
2 heaping tsp oil and MIX...THEN ADD:
3/4 cup cold water
3 Tbs molasses/honey (I use 1 1/2 Tbs of each)
KNEAD 2 minutes on a floured surface
DIVIDE into 3 or 4 equal parts
ROLL into 6-7" rounds (thin)
MARK with a cross
BAKE at 350* for 10-12 minutes on ungreased cookie sheet (let cool, place in baggie, freezes well)

Prayer Concerns: Maggie McQuillen, and all facing issues from the corona virus: sickness or social isolation. (Names will be removed from the prayer list after four weeks unless there is a change in the person's condition. Requests need to be made by an immediate family member.)

St Paul Staff Emails and Phone Numbers

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Please call us if we can be of assistance to you. PLEASE leave a message if we cannot answer and we will return your call ASAP. We may be separated, BUT we are not alone!

Regarding church openings

Dear friends of St. Paul Lutheran,
We want to remind you that we will not be gathering in the church for worship until further notice. The relaxing of the Covid regulations simply invites us to now form a task force that will determine when and how we will gather again. This will take some time. Please pray with us for continued safety, vision, and patience. We will keep you updated as decisions are made.

In the meantime, recorded services will continue to be made available on our website and Facebook page.

Sincerely,
The Church Council

Introduction: Today is sometimes called "Good Shepherd Sunday." Jesus is called the "gate" of the sheep in today's gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world's division, violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God's tender care to all creation.

First Reading: Acts 2:42-47 **NIV**

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the

believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

We are told that *Acts of the Apostles* was authored by the same person who wrote the Gospel of Luke; it is the second book in the series and it deals primarily with the development of the early community of believers in Jesus as the Christ. They led a uniquely communal life which revolved around their mutual trust rooted in prayer and the breaking of bread as instructed by Jesus. In the first years of “the Church,” believers gathered in the Temple or synagogues in accord with their Jewish customs and observed the Sabbath. Then they participated in an additional “potluck” meal ritual which they celebrated in their homes. This was not a formalized event with ordained leaders and books of prayers. It was more of an organic family gathering in which all participated, and we are told by Luke that it was with exultation and sincerity of heart that they gave powerful testimony. They would gather to celebrate the meal together, as Jesus had, recalling his teachings, miracles, and more significantly, his presence, when they took bread, blessed it, broke it, and shared it. Likewise, they did so with the wine. This early community of believers was so sincere that their actions even in the public marketplace and workplace attracted the attention of others and won over many hearts. Their actions spoke as loudly as any words, and people were heard to say, “See how they love each other.”

Luke described an ideal community, and undoubtedly some will scoff because it seems so unrealistic, but it is a worthwhile goal that we would be known more for our love of each other than our squabbling or pettiness or greed. Perhaps our exultation and sincerity can be experienced most profoundly in our homes or as we gather in small faith groups, and from there spill out into the public places.

Psalm 23 NIV

¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,

³ he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake.

⁴ Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD, forever.

Second Reading: First letter of Peter to the Christian Sojourners in Asia Minor 2:19-25 NIV

¹⁹ For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. ²⁰ But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹ To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

²² “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” ²⁵ For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Again, more information might help us to understand the perspective of this letter. The sacred author is addressing slaves serving in the households of early Christians. Contrary to tradition, this author mentions the slaves first in his list of those being exhorted which places them as first in social rank. Societally speaking, slaves were the lowest in rank, but in the household of the Lord, slaves who endure suffering at the hands of unjust masters rank first through their association with the suffering Lord.

The author is holding faithful slaves up as a symbol for the entire Christian community who are considered resident aliens and strangers in their new land, Asia Minor (Turkey), and their new faith community. Being treated as second class people and suffering through discrimination or even violence was difficult. By following a suffering savior, these believers could persevere in doing good while experiencing undeserved suffering. The issue of the letter is not about the morality of slavery, which was an accepted part of the culture; rather, it concerned how one endures unjust treatment from an unjust master. Peter offers encouragement by suggesting that Jesus was Messiah in the form of a Suffering Servant, like the one first introduced by Isaiah hundreds of years earlier. Jesus, because he endured insult, violence, and death without striking back was the savior who knew their plight and showed a more divine way of responding to the unjust master called Rome. He showed the way to life even in the midst of suffering because he chose to be silent, to forgive, and to not retaliate for unjust injuries.

Gospel: John 10:1-10 {NRSV}

"Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

⁷Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. ⁹I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

Jesus uses what would have been a common image in the culture of his time to explain the proper relationship between a leader and his followers. Jesus refers to himself as both the Good Shepherd and the Sheep gate. Unless you've spent some time around sheep, you might not really appreciate the significance of this image, but mainly, Jesus is pointing out that leaders, like shepherds, must lead through care, compassion, and presence. This story is being told by Jesus to the Pharisees to further emphasize their attempts at leadership from a distance. (Pharisee means: separate or holier ones). This monologue follows on the heels of a situation in which the Pharisees had once again "scattered the sheep" {this phrase was borrowed from the prophet Ezekiel, chapter 34.} Perhaps you recall the story: a man born blind encountered Jesus, and because of his faith, had been healed. He came to believe in Jesus as the chosen one of God. The Pharisees wondered if the man suffered blindness because of his sin or the sin of his parents. After interrogating everyone, including the man's parents, the Pharisees persisted in their disbelief that Jesus, a common carpenter, could accomplish this righteous act. They remained in their sin, in their blindness to Jesus' true identity, while the one who was physically blind came to new faith; his eyes were opened. It was the disbelief of the Pharisees, and their pleasure in categorizing people as saved and unsaved, clean and unclean, in or out, that resulted in the scattering of the flock. It was to this same flock that Jesus was sent, and his mission was to gather them, care for them, and lead

them to the Kingdom of God. Like sheep with their shepherd, when people come to trust someone, they will easily follow that person's beckoning. Jesus spent so much time teaching, healing, and eating with the common people that they came to trust him as a noble shepherd, and they responded to his voice. This threatened the Pharisees and chief priests who saw themselves as holier than the common folk and separated themselves in the way they dressed, prayed, and with whom they shared meals. Subsequently, the people struggled to follow their leadership because they were experienced as "thieves, bandits, and strangers."

Jesus does something unique in his speech pattern that would have immediately caught the ear of his hearers. Normally, when a Jewish teacher cited a reference in order to emphasize a point or strengthen an argument, he would say, for example, "Amen, Amen, as Rabbi Hillel has said.... Or "Truly, as it says in Leviticus 15...." But Jesus, in citing an authority for his proclamation refers to no one but himself when he says, "Amen, Amen, I say to you...." He speaks with the authority of the Almighty.

In addition, John wants to make it very clear that Jesus the Christ is the source of salvation and that by passing through baptism in his name (the sheep gate) one gains access to the sheep and joins the security of the flock. It is in the flock of the Good Shepherd that one is cared for, held in esteem, and able to find peace. This contrasts the experience of Jews under the leadership of the Pharisees who often neglected the peasants, taxed them for their own benefit, and kept the average person in fear of ever receiving salvation from a stingy God. This rivets into the heart the idea that the Christian community of the first century was separate from the non-believing world, especially the Jewish community that had just rejected them, and needed to protect itself through noble leadership and great loving sacrifice.



Sheep Stell at Sourhope, Cheviot Hills near the Scottish boarder with Northumberland.

Taking it home:

- In what ways do you help others experience life more abundantly?
- Peter used the terms “Lord and Christ.” What title do you prefer to use when speaking about, or praying with Jesus? Why?
- Is there a time when you acted like Jesus and refused to respond to an insult or accepted unjust threats without reacting? From where does a person’s source of strength have to come in order to consistently act this way?
- Instead of smashing bugs this week, watch and marvel at them as God’s creation.
- If it rains this week, get out an old year book and laugh a little.
- Are you the noble leader/good shepherd in your home?



Mindfulness (set aside five minutes. breathe and read through three times. Which words or ideas hold energy for you? What images and feelings emerge in your imagination?)

“For me, trees have always been the most penetrating preachers. I revere them when they live in tribes and families, in forests and groves. And even more I revere them when they stand alone. They are like lonely persons. Not like hermits who have stolen away out of some weakness, but like great, solitary men, like Beethoven and Nietzsche. In their highest boughs the world rustles, their roots rest in infinity; but they do not lose themselves there, they struggle with all the force of their lives for one thing only: to fulfill themselves according to their own laws, to build up their own form, to represent themselves. Nothing is holier, nothing is more exemplary than a beautiful, strong tree. When a tree is cut down and reveals its naked death-wound to the sun, one can read its whole history in the luminous, inscribed disk of its trunk: in the rings of its years, its scars, all the struggle, all the suffering, all the sickness, all the happiness and prosperity stand truly written, the narrow years and the luxurious years, the attacks withstood, the storms endured. And every young farmboy knows that the hardest and noblest wood has the narrowest rings, that high on the mountains and in continuing danger the most indestructible, the strongest, the ideal trees grow. — [Hermann Hesse, Bäume. Betrachtungen und Gedichte](#)

