

Fourth Sunday of Easter Sunday, May 12, 2019

The Collect: O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people: Grant that when we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Acts 9:36-43 read from the New American Standard Bible

36 Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did. 37 And it happened at that time that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room. 38 Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, imploring him, "Do not delay in coming to us." 39 So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them. 40 But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. 41 And he gave her his hand and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. 42 It became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. 43 And Peter stayed many days in Joppa with a tanner named Simon.

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 23 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 The Lord is my shepherd; *

I shall not be in want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures *

and leads me beside still waters.

3 He revives my soul *

and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.

4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

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

5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those
who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.

6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days
of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Second Lesson: Revelation 7:9-17 read from the New Century Version Bible

9 After the vision of these things I looked, and there was a great number of people, so many that no one could count them. They were from every nation, tribe, people, and language of the earth. They were all standing before the throne and before the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. 10 They were shouting in a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." 11 All the angels were standing around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures. They all bowed down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, "Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, and strength belong to our God forever and ever. Amen!"

13 Then one of the elders asked me, "Who are these people dressed in white robes? Where did they come from?"

14 I answered, "You know, sir." And the elder said to me, "These are the people who have come out of the great distress. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Because of this, they are before the throne of God. They worship him day and night in his temple. And the One who sits on the throne will be present with them. 16 Those people will never be hungry again, and they will never be thirsty again. The sun will not hurt them, and no heat will burn them, 17 because the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs of water that give life. And God will

wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: John 10:22-30 read from the New International Version Bible

22 Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter,²³ and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade.²⁴ The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

25 Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, 26 but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. 27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. 30 I and the Father are one.”

Closing Prayer: On May 13th we remember Frances Perkins Public Servant and Prophetic Witness, 1965. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

Frances Perkins was the first woman to serve a President of the United States as a member of the Cabinet.

Born in Boston on April 10, 1880, and educated at Mount Holyoke College and Columbia University, Perkins was passionate about the social problems occasioned by the continuing effects of industrialization and urbanization.

As a young adult, she discovered The Episcopal Church and was confirmed at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Lake Forest, Illinois, on June 11, 1905, and she remained a faithful and active Episcopalian for the remainder of her life.

After moving to New York, she became an advocate for industrial safety and persistent voice for the reform of what she believed were unjust labor laws. This work got the attention of two of New York’s governors, Al Smith and Franklin D. Roosevelt, in whose state administrations

she took part.

President Roosevelt appointed her to a Cabinet post as Secretary of Labor, a position she would hold for twelve years. As Secretary of Labor, Perkins would have a major role in shaping the New Deal legislation signed into law by President Roosevelt, most notably the establishment of the Social Security program.

During her years of public service, Frances Perkins depended upon her faith, her life of prayer, and the guidance of her church for the support she needed to assist the United States and its leadership to face the enormous problems of the time. During her time as Secretary of Labor, she would take time away from her duties on a monthly basis and make a retreat with the All Saints Sisters of the Poor in nearby Catonsville, Maryland. She spoke publicly of how the Incarnation informed her conviction that humans ought to work with God to create a just Christian social order.

Following her public service, she became a professor of industrial and labor relations at Cornell University. She remained active in teaching, social justice advocacy, and in the mission of The Episcopal Church.

She was an eloquent example of lay ministry, writing that “the special vocation of the laity is to conduct and carry on the worldly and secular affairs of modern society . . . in order that all men may be maintained in health and decency.” She died in New York City on May 14, 1965.

Let us pray: Loving God, we bless your Name for Frances Perkins, who in faithfulness to her baptism sought to build a society in which all may live in health and decency: Help us, following her example and in union with her prayers, to contend tirelessly for justice and for the protection of all, that we may be faithful followers of Jesus Christ; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**