

Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 25

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 4:5-12 read from the New International Version Bible

5 The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. 6 Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. 7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! 9 If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, 10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. 11 Jesus is
"the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the cornerstone.'

12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

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.

Epistle: 1 John 3:16-24 read from the New Living Translation

16 We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. 17 If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person?

18 Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. 19 Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God. 20 Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and he knows everything.

21 Dear friends, if we don't feel guilty, we can come to God with bold confidence. 22 And we will receive from him whatever we ask because we obey him and do the things that please him.

23 And this is his commandment: We must believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he commanded us. 24 Those who obey God's commandments remain in fellowship with him, and he with them. And we know he lives in us because the Spirit he gave us lives in us.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: John 10:11-18 read from the New Revised Standard Version Bible

11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 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. 13 The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 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. 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. 18 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.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: April 26 Robert Hunt Priest and First Chaplain at Jamestown. Read from A Great Cloud of Witnesses.

Robert Hunt was born in England around 1568. He was a parish priest in Reculver, Kent, beginning in 1594, and in 1604 became vicar of Heathfield Parish in the Diocese of Chichester.

In 1607, Hunt accompanied Captain John Smith and the Jamestown colonists, serving as their priest and chaplain. The first celebration of the Anglican rite of Holy Eucharist recorded in North America took place on May 24, 1607, and Hunt is believed to have presided. Captain Smith’s diary notes another celebration of the Holy Eucharist on June 21, 1607, and Hunt is more clearly indicated as the presiding priest.

In Captain Smith’s journal, the following tribute to Robert Hunt and his ministry may be found: “He was an honest, religious and courageous divine. He preferred the service of God in so good a voyage to every thought of ease at home. He endured every privation, yet none ever heard him repine. During his life, our factions were oft healed and our great extremities so comforted that they seemed easy in comparison with what we endured after his memorable death. We all received from him the Holy Communion as a pledge of

reconciliation, for we all loved him for his exceeding goodness.”

Hunt died sometime prior to April 10, 1608. A memorial has been erected by the National Park Service in Historic Jamestown.

Let us pray: Almighty God, we bless your Name for the life and witness of Robert Hunt, first chaplain to the Jamestown colony, who sought to unite your people in your love amid great hardship: Help us, like him, to work for reconciliation wherever we may be placed; through Jesus Christ your Son, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**