

Fourth Sunday of Easter, May 11, 2025

The Collect and Psalm will be read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer
The First Lesson, Second Lesson and Gospel will be read from the Christian Standard Bible

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

36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which is translated Dorcas). She was always doing good works and acts of charity. 37 About that time she became sick and died. After washing her, they placed her in a room upstairs. 38 Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples heard that Peter was there and sent two men to him who urged him, "Don't delay in coming with us." 39 Peter got up and went with them. When he arrived, they led him to the room upstairs. And all the widows approached him, weeping and showing him the robes and clothes that Dorcas had made while she was with them. 40 Peter sent them all out of the room. He knelt down, prayed, and turning toward the body said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, saw Peter, and sat up. 41 He gave her his hand and helped her stand up. He called the saints and widows and presented her alive. 42 This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. 43 Peter stayed for some time in Joppa with Simon, a leather tanner.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Psalm: Psalm 23

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

9 After this I looked, and there was a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.

They were clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice:

Salvation belongs to our God,
who is seated on the throne,
and to the Lamb!

11 All the angels stood around the throne, and along with the elders and the four living creatures they fell facedown before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying,

Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and strength
be to our God forever and ever. Amen.

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

14 I said to him, "Sir, you know."

Then he told me: These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 For this reason they are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple.

The one seated on the throne will shelter them:

16 They will no longer hunger;

they will no longer thirst;

the sun will no longer strike them,

nor will any scorching heat.

17 For the Lamb who is at the center of the throne will shepherd them;

he will guide them to springs of the waters of life,

and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

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Gospel: John 10:22-30

22 Then the Festival of Dedication took place in Jerusalem, and it was winter. 23 Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's Colonnade. 24 The Jews surrounded him and asked, "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

25 "I did tell you and you don't believe," Jesus answered them. "The works that I do in my Father's name testify about me. 26 But you don't believe because you are not of my sheep. 27 My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will 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 is able to snatch them out of the Father's

hand. 30 I and the Father are one.”

The Gospel of the Lord

On May 17 we celebrate the life of William Hobart Hare, Bishop of Niobrara and of South Dakota. Read from A Great Cloud of Witnesses.

William Hobart Hare was born on May 17, 1838, in Princeton, New Jersey, the grandson of Bishop John Henry Hobart. Although he studied at the University of Pennsylvania, he never received a degree and prepared for ordination without attending seminary. He was ordained to the diaconate in 1859 and to the priesthood in 1862. He served St. Luke's and St. Paul's, Chestnut Hill, both in Philadelphia.

He moved to Minnesota in 1863 with the hope that a different climate would improve his wife's failing health. It was there that he first came into contact with Native Americans, an encounter that would change his life and shape his vocation. Hare returned to Philadelphia in 1867 to become the Rector of the Church of the Ascension, but his personal interest in the church's ministry among Native Americans never waned.

In 1871, the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church created the Missionary District of Niobrara encompassing much of the Dakotas. A year later, the House of Bishops elected Hare to become the Bishop of Niobrara, and he was ordained to the episcopate on January 9, 1873.

Bishop Hare, often referred to as “The Apostle to the Sioux,” devoted himself to work among the Native Americans in the vast expanse of the Niobrara Territory. Well ahead of his time in his approach to mission work, Hare believed it was important to honor as much of the tradition and culture of the people as possible. His desire was not to destroy the fabric of Sioux culture, but to bring the gospel into the midst of it so that the people could also come to know Jesus. Instead of suppressing the customs of the people, he saw them as vessels that could communicate God's grace.

In 1883, the House of Bishops divided the Missionary District of Niobrara into the districts of

North and South Dakota. Bishop Hare from that point took responsibility for what would become the Diocese of South Dakota. He worked vigorously to ensure that the Native Americans in his area of care had access to education and healthcare. By his initiative, the number of native catechists and clergy grew greatly. By the end of his life, over half of the Native Americans in South Dakota were Episcopalians, with Hare having confirmed over 7,000 of them. The Niobrara deanery became a site of gathering for Episcopalian Native Americans across the Great Plains that continues to this day. Hare died on October 23, 1909.

Let us pray: Holy God, you called your servant William Hobart Hare to proclaim the means of grace and the hope of glory to the peoples of the Great Plains: We give you thanks for the devotion of those who received the Good News gladly, and for the faithfulness of the generations who have succeeded them. Strengthen us with your Holy Spirit, that we may walk in their footsteps and lead many to faith in Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**