

**The Presque Isle Congregational Church**
United Church of Christ
April 21, 2024

Prelude Barbara Merryman

Welcoming Music You Are Welcome Here

Words of Welcome Jennifer Gillis-White

Introit Guide My Feet PIUCC Choir

Call to Worship

One: When we are scattered, Jesus our Good Shepherd gathers us in.

Many: When we are lost and lonely, we can depend on Christ's love.

One: When we are oppressed, Jesus our Good Shepherd cares for us.

Many: When we are threatened because of who we are, we can depend on Christ's protection.

One: We know Christ, because Christ's tenderness has guided us for generations.

Many: Christ knows us by name. Christ will lay down his very life for our sake.

One: Let us worship our Good Shepherd, who cares for all of us with fierce love.

Many: Let us give thanks for Christ's presence with us.

Opening Prayer (Unison)

Holy God, you sent us Jesus as our comforter and guide. We give you thanks for the ways he cares for us. Help us be empowered to join him in protecting the oppressed and marginalized. We pray this in gratitude for your provision. Amen.

Opening Hymn Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

Two-Minute Message Jean Clark

Choir Anthem Precious Lord PIUCC Choir

Scripture Reading **John 10:11-18** **Common English Bible**

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. When the hired hand sees the wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away. That's because he isn't the shepherd; the sheep aren't really his. So the wolf attacks the sheep and scatters them. He's only a hired hand and the sheep don't matter to him. "I am the good shepherd. I know my own sheep and they know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. I give up my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that don't belong to this sheep pen. I must lead them too. They will listen to my voice and there will be one flock, with one shepherd. "This is why the Father loves me: I give up my life so that I can take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I give it up because I want to. I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it up again. I received this commandment from my Father."

Reflection *Lay It Down* Daniel Jackson

Reflective Music Barbara Merryman

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Shepherding Christ, even as you lay down your life for us, we confess our unwillingness to support those in need. Too often, we may be more like the one who runs away in times of trouble. We aren't always bold enough to protect the powerless; following your example is rarely easy or comfortable. Forgive us. Help us lay down our apathy and follow your example. Remind us that we belong to one another, and to you. Amen.

Words of Grace

Leader: Beloved of God, receive this comfort. It is impossible to respond to every need in this complicated world. A full life of faith gives us the grace to lay down our work, take the rest we need, then refocus our energy toward the cause of the oppressed. Rest in the shelter of your Good Shepherd, knowing you can take up the cause again with restored souls.

Many: We are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

Blessing of Gifts

Call: Jesus offers us fullness of life, protecting us and advocating for our needs. What will we give to join him in the work of building beloved communities in the world? (*Please pause while the offering plate is brought forward*). Together we respond...

Response: Gracious God, thank you for your gift of Jesus Christ, who cares for us and protects us. With these gifts we return to you, help us care for others in our communities and around the world. Amen.

Community News and Announcements

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Our Creator*, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

**Please use whatever name is most familiar/comfortable when you pray to God.*

Closing Hymn

The King of Love (v 1,2,3, and 6)

Benediction

Today you have received the gift of Christ's protective, unceasing love for you. Because you are beloved, may all that you do and all that you are be a reflection of that love. Fight for the powerless, help the weak, and provide for the needy, because Jesus provides for you. Amen.

Sung Response

God Be With You

God be with you till we meet again; By good counsel guide, uphold you.
With a shepherd's care enfold you; God be with you till we meet again.

Pastoral Care Contact

Pastor Diane's Phone Number: 386-847-0883

Prayers for today's service came from "Power to Lay It Down: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday of Easter Year B" by Rev. Jacob Nault, Pastor of Union-Congregational Church in Waupun, WI.