

Fourth Sunday in Lent, Year A

Color: Purple

Scriptures: [Scripture linked to NRSV at Oremus Bible Browser]

[1 Samuel 16:1-13](#) (*David is chosen and anointed to be king by Samuel*)

[Psalm 23](#) (*The Lord is my shepherd; You have anointed my head with oil*)

[Ephesians 5:8-14](#) (*Awake from sleep, live as children of light; Christ will shine on you*)

[John 9:1-41](#) (*Jesus heals a man born blind; Jesus brings light into a dark world*)

Themes: God's Call, God the Shepherd, Light, Awakening, Healing, Vision

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Hymn Suggestions link to Hymnary.org, a searchable resource with a wealth of information. The tunes listed here are the ones most commonly associated with the texts, and the biblical/thematic references suggest the hymn's association with the morning's scriptures or themes.

Amazing Grace (<i>NEW BRITAIN</i>)	John
As a Chalice Cast of God (<i>INWARD LIGHT</i>)	1 Samuel
Awake, My Soul, and With the Sun (<i>MORNING HYMN</i>)	1 Samuel
Be Thou My Vision (<i>SLANE</i>)	John
Gather Us In (<i>GATHER US IN</i>)	Ephesians, Communion
He Leadeth Me (<i>HE LEADETH ME</i>)	Psalms
I'll Praise My Maker While I've Breath (<i>OLD 113TH</i>)	John
I Want to Walk As a Child of the Light (<i>HOUSTON</i>)	Ephesians
The King of Love My Shepherd Is (<i>ST. COLUMBA; DOMINUS REGIT ME</i>)	Psalms
Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service (<i>BEACH SPRING; IN BABILONE; HYFRYDOL</i>)	John
The Lord's My Shepherd (<i>CRIMOND</i>)	Psalms
O Christ, the Healer (<i>ERHALT UNS HERR; ANGELUS; ROCKINGHAM</i>)	John
O For a Closer Walk With God (<i>BEATITUDO; CAITHNESS</i>)	Ephesians
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us (<i>BRADBURY</i>)	Psalms
Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus (<i>LEMMEL</i>)	John
Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters (<i>BEACH SPRING</i>)	John

ANTHEMS

E = Easy, M = Moderate, MD = Moderately Difficult

Amazing Grace - MD John
NEW BRITAIN; Alice Parker/Robert Shaw, arr.
© 1960, Lawson-Gould, LG00918
SATB (divisi), a cappella

Awake, O Sleeper - E Ephesians
Marty Haugen
© 1987, GIA Publications, G-3290
SATB, (opt. Cong.), Keyboard, 2 Flutes, Guitar

Come Away to the Skies - MD Ephesians
Paul Halley
© 1998, Pelagos Music, PEL2037
SATB, Soloist, Piano, opt. Rhythm/Bass, Organ

Good Shepherd - M Psalms
Gwyneth Walker
© 2015, E.C. Schirmer, No. 8070
SATB, Organ

Grace – E John
O WALLY WALLY/Mark Hayes, arr.
© 1993, Beckenhorst, BP1502
SATB, Piano (also available in SSAA and TTBB)

The Lord Is My Shepherd - M Psalms
Howard Goodall
© 1994/2000, Faber Music, 12-0571520480
SATB, Solo, Organ (string accompaniment available)

The Lord Is My Shepherd - M Psalms
John Rutter
© 1978, Oxford University Press, 9780193856301
SATB, Organ (string accompaniment available)

Precious Lord, Take My Hand - M Lent, Psalms
Thomas Dorsey/Jack Schrader, arr.
© 1995, Unichappell; Hope Publishing, GC 968
SSATB, Piano

Psalm Folksong - M Psalms
Edward Penhorwood
© 1981, Hinshaw Music, HMC-534
SATB, Keyboard

Shepherd Me, O God - ME Psalms
Marty Haugen/Mark Hayes, arr.
© 2016, Hope Publishing, C 6054
SAB, Piano, opt. Cello and Violin

We Shall Walk Through the Valley in Peace - E
..... Psalms
Traditional Spiritual/William Appling, arr.
© 2002, World Library Publications, No. 8729
SATB, a cappella (TTBB setting available)

-- Youth and Children --

The Lord Is My Shepherd - E Psalms
Allen Pote
© 1991, Choristers Guild, CGA-551
SAT(B), Piano (also available in 2-Part)

Do You Know Your Shepherd's Voice? - E Psalms
Suzanne Lord
© 1994, Choristers Guild, CGA-673
2-Part, Piano

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL (Prayers, Poems, Quotes & Liturgies)

*Be thou a bright flame before me,
Be thou a guiding star above me,
Be thou a smooth path below me,
Be thou a kindly shepherd behind me,
Today, tonight and forever.*

-- ST COLUMBA (521–597)

*Like the lost sheep, we may have been lost in ourselves,
but from the start we have always been found in him.*

— ROBERT FARRAR CAPON, "More Theology & Less Cream"

*Good Shepherd,
You have a wild and crazy sheep
in love with thorns and brambles.
But please don't get tired of looking for me!
I know You won't. For You have found me.
All I have to do is stay found.*

— THOMAS MERTON

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CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The Lord is my shepherd,

People: For I was once in darkness.

Leader: He leads me beside still waters,

People: For I have wandered long years in the desert.

Leader: Even under the shadow of death, I fear no evil,

People: For my Lord is the light of the world.

Leader: My head is anointed with oil and my cup overflows,

People: Lord, I believe.

**All: Surely your goodness and love will follow me and I will
dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

-- MARTHA DIXON KEARSE*

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GATHERING PRAYER

Holy God, you chose us before we chose you,
now work your will in the chaos of our lives.

Give us the insight to see the truth in your word,
and the words to praise you wherever you are found --
making miracles from spit and mud:
through Jesus Christ, your Son. **Amen.**

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*Be a lamp or a lifeboat or a ladder. Help someone's soul heal.
Walk out of your house like a shepherd.*

— RUMI

CONFESSION

Lord, we are a people acquainted with darkness. We have grown comfortable with violence and accept anger as part of our daily life. We see enemies all around us; we find it hard to love our neighbors, much less our enemies.

We have allowed ourselves to be intentionally blind
to the tragedies all around us, and deaf to the cries
of our brothers and sisters for justice,
for equal opportunity, for refuge, for peace. Forgive us, Lord.

Open our eyes and heal our blindness -- that we would tame our anger,
see ourselves in perspective,
and use our privilege for others.

Help us to give up all the excuses
that enable us to deny others the abundant life you offer.

Even as Jesus healed the man blind from birth, so we ask that you would heal us, Lord. Help us to truly see the world as you would have it, each of us beloved and cared for, each of us seeing the face of Jesus in those around us. It is in the name of Jesus that we offer this prayer. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: The shadow of our sin is banished
by the Light of the world.

People: Lord, I believe.

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PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Prepare our hearts, O God, to discover your Word.
Heal us from those places where our blindness keeps
us from seeing you. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

God, who cares for you as a shepherd cares for his
sheep, Christ, the Good Shepherd, who seeks out
and saves the lost, Spirit, who is your Guide, lead
you into the ways of peace, now and evermore.
Amen.

*Thanks to Martha Dixon Kears for her this week's prayers and liturgies.

Warren Howell, editor