

Shepherd's Voice

The monthly parish newsletter of

GOOD SHEPHERD ANGLICAN CHURCH

EASTER 2025



WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR EASTER 2025

WHAT WE BELIEVE...

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down
from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the
Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius
Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance
with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living
and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver
of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son
who with the Father and the Son is wor-
shiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic
Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the for-
giveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Sunday, April 20 @ 10:00 AM

Sunday morning Holy Eucharist—Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 27 @ 8:30 AM or 10:00 AM

Sunday morning Holy Eucharist—Second Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 4 @ 8:30 AM or 10:00 AM

Sunday morning Holy Eucharist—Third Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 11 @ 8:30 AM or 10:00 AM

Sunday morning Holy Eucharist—Fourth Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 18 @ 8:30 AM or 10:00 AM

Sunday morning Holy Eucharist—Fifth Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 25 @ 8:30 AM or 10:00 AM

Sunday morning Holy Eucharist—Sixth Sunday of Easter

Thursday, May 29 @ 12:15 PM

Ascension Day Holy Eucharist

Sunday, June 1 @ 8:30 AM or 10:00 AM

Sunday morning Holy Eucharist—Sunday After the Ascension

Sunday, June 8 @ 8:30 AM or 10:00 AM

Sunday morning Holy Eucharist—Pentecost Sunday

PLEASE NOTE:

Our YouTube channel is located at www.YouTube.com/GoodShepherdMet.

Each Sunday morning, we livestream our 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist on our channel.

FROM THE RECTOR'S STUDY

THE BUDDING NOW: *LIVING THE RESURRECTED LIFE IN SPRING'S EMBRACE*

Spring is in the air in Metairie. From the explosion of azaleas and the inviting scent of crawfish boiling—Spring has sprung and it offers a beautiful metaphor for the very heart of the Christian faith: resurrection. It's a season of undeniable renewal, a vibrant testament to life emerging from the apparent dormancy of winter. But the resurrection isn't merely a historical event we commemorate each Easter; it's a present reality, a way of being that infuses our daily lives with hope, purpose, and an unshakeable sense of new beginnings. To live the resurrected life now is to actively participate in the transformative power of Christ's victory over death, allowing its light to shape our thoughts, actions, and very being.

The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Romans, eloquently captures this present dimension of resurrection: "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Romans 6:4, NIV). Notice the active verb: "may live." This isn't a promise solely for the afterlife; it's an invitation to a transformed existence *now*. Just as the seed buried in the earth bursts forth with new growth, so too are we called to shed the old ways of being – the patterns of sin, fear, and despair – and embrace the vibrant life offered through Christ.

Consider the story of the woman caught in adultery in John's Gospel (John 8:1-11). Condemned by the religious authorities and facing a bleak future, she encounters Jesus. His response isn't one of judgment, but of radical forgiveness and a clear directive: "Go now and leave your life of sin." This encounter embodies the resurrected life in action. The woman is offered a new beginning, a chance to shed the weight of her past and walk in a different direction. This isn't simply about escaping punishment; it's about being empowered to live a life aligned with love, grace, and a renewed sense of self-worth.

Living the resurrected life now also means embracing a perspective of hope that transcends the inevitable challenges and disappointments of this world. Just as the early disciples, initially devastated by Jesus' crucifixion, were transformed by the encounter with the risen Lord, so too are we called to find strength and resilience in the face of adversity. The resurrection is the ultimate affirmation that death does not have the final word. As Paul triumphantly declares, "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55, NIV). This isn't a denial of suffering, but a profound conviction that even in the darkest valleys, the light of Christ's victory shines through, offering solace and the promise of ultimate restoration.

Practically, what does this look like in our daily lives? It manifests in countless ways:

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Forgiveness: Just as Christ offered forgiveness, we are called to extend it to others and to ourselves, releasing the burdens of resentment and bitterness that can stifle our spirit.

Compassion: Recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of every individual, as Christ did, compels us to acts of kindness, service, and advocacy for the marginalized.

Hopeful Resilience: Facing challenges not with despair, but with the unwavering belief that even in difficulty, God's grace and the promise of renewal are present.

Following the Great Commission: The resurrected Christ's final instruction to his disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20), is not just for a select few. Living the resurrected life now compels us to share the Good News of this transformative power with those around us, both through our words, and more importantly, through the way we live. This might look like sharing our faith with a neighbor, volunteering time at a local charity, or simply living a life that reflects the love and hope we have found in Christ, drawing others to inquire about the source of our joy and peace.

Embracing New Beginnings: Recognizing that every day offers an opportunity for growth, learning, and a fresh start, letting go of past failures and embracing the possibilities of the present.

Spring reminds us that life is inherently dynamic, a cycle of death and rebirth. The resurrected life is not a static state but an ongoing journey of transformation, guided by the love and grace of Christ. As we witness the world around us bursting forth with new life, let us also cultivate that same vibrant spirit within ourselves, embracing the budding now and living fully in the light of the resurrection. May this season of renewal inspire us all to live with a deeper sense of hope, purpose, and the unwavering conviction that in Christ, new life is always possible.

Until next month, let your light shine!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fr. Randall M. Graf" with a small cross at the end of the name.

Fr. Randall M. Graf, Rector

A NEW SHEPHERD IN OUR MIDST: WELCOMING FR. ANDRES GONZALEZ

Our Good Shepherd family has been blessed in a truly unique and wonderful way over the past few months. Many of you have already had the pleasure of meeting a warm and engaging presence among us, a man who arrived as a visitor one Sunday and has since become an integral part of our community: Father Andres Gonzalez.

Fr. Andres brings a rich and fascinating background to our parish. He is a retired priest from the Old Catholic Church, a tradition distinct from the Roman Catholic Church. While there are no Old Catholic parishes in our corner of Louisiana, God's providence has led Fr. Andres to our doorstep.

Since his arrival, Fr. Andres has felt a deep connection with the people and spirit of Good Shepherd. Recognizing this call, he has embarked on a journey to formally align his ministry with our Anglican tradition. We are delighted to share that Fr. Andres is currently in the process of incardination, which essentially means transferring his holy orders to the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) and specifically to our own Diocese of the Western Gulf Coast (DWGC).

Our Rector, Father Randall Graf, has been working diligently with Fr. Andres to navigate the necessary canonical channels. This process has recently reached a significant milestone. We received wonderful news from our Bishop, The Right Reverend Clark W. P. Lowenfield, who has graciously advised that he is accepting Fr. Andres as a priest within our diocese, pending a formal process of regularization.

This regularization will involve Bishop Clark laying hands on Fr. Andres, a powerful symbol of the Holy Spirit's continued work in his life and ministry. Fr. Andres will also reaffirm his commitment to the priesthood by reciting his solemn priestly vows and signing the canonical oaths of obedience and authority within the ACNA.



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Fr. Graf is eagerly looking forward to securing a date in the near future for Bishop Clark to visit Good Shepherd. This will be a momentous occasion for our parish as we formally welcome Fr. Andres into our diocesan family and witness his official acceptance as a priest in the Anglican Church.

Beyond his pastoral calling, Fr. Andres' life journey is truly remarkable. He immigrated to America from Cuba as a child and has a distinguished history in law enforcement, having served with the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD). He continues to serve our wider community as a chaplain for the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Department (JPSO), offering spiritual guidance and support to those who serve and protect us.

Looking ahead, Fr. Andres is filled with enthusiasm for the ministry opportunities at Good Shepherd. Being fluent in Spanish, he is particularly passionate about expanding our parish's footprint and reaching more hearts with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He envisions building bridges within our diverse community and bringing the love of Christ to new souls.

Please continue to keep Fr. Andres in your prayers as we await the Bishop's visit and the completion of this exciting process. Let us also extend our warmest welcome and support to Fr. Andres as he embarks on this new chapter of his ministry here at Good Shepherd. We are truly blessed to have him among us, and we eagerly anticipate the many ways his unique gifts and experiences will enrich our parish family. Stay tuned for updates regarding the date of Bishop Clark's visit – it will be a day of great joy and celebration for our Good Shepherd community!

JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN TODAY, ALLELUIA!

What joyous words as we celebrate the risen Christ! After forty days of Lenten fasting from speaking or singing this word of praise, it is indeed a time of exuberance as we join as God's people on this most sacred occasion in the church year. We will sing together as we welcome our celebrant Fr. Randall, rejoicing in the risen Savior.

The text comes from the 14th century and was originally in Latin. Renowned hymn writer Charles Wesley added a stanza during the 18th century. Each line of the text begins with a statement of belief followed by an Alleluia. The tune comes from a 17th century collection "Lyrica Davidica."

I look forward to hearing voices raised in song on this most special day and throughout the Season of Eastertide! Easter blessings to you all!

Rinda Coleman

Music Director

SUMMER YOUTH RETREAT FOR 6TH-8TH GRADERS

The Louisiana Deanery, in cooperation with Holy Cross Anglican Church in Baton Rouge announce our inaugural summer youth retreat will be June 8-11th at Chicot State Park (Ville Platte, LA).

The youth retreat is open to students from grades 6th-8th and is intended to be a time of rest, communion with God, and an opportunity to connect with other ACNA youth across south Louisiana.

Young folks: if you want to meet new friends, recuperate from the school year, find some time to unwind and unplug, or allow yourself to be delighted... then this event is for you! (If you have older youth who would like to participate or have additional questions, please reach out to Stephanie Whitfield at stephanie.whitfield63@gmail.com or Fr. Jarrett at jarrett@holycrossbr.org)



\$150 PER CAMPER
<<< SCAN TO REGISTER
AND FOR MORE INFO

HOSTED BY
 **HOLY CROSS**
ANGLICAN CHURCH

He is Risen!



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JESUS
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PRAYING AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Since the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown began, Good Shepherd Church has been streaming our 10:00 AM Sunday morning Service of Holy Eucharist each week. During the distribution of Holy Communion, the lector reads a prayer entitled ***An Act of Spiritual Communion*** for those who are watching at home and are unable to partake in the reception of Holy Communion sacramentally. That beautiful prayer comes from the Book of Common Prayer (pg. 677, ACNA 2019) and can be prayed by a Christian any time they are longing for the grace of Holy Communion but are unable to receive the tangible elements of the sacrament. These are the words to that prayer:

***Dear Jesus, I believe that you
are truly present in the Holy Sacrament.
I love you above all things,
and I desire to possess you within my soul.
And since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I beseech you to come spiritually into my heart.
I unite myself to you, together with all your faithful people
gathered around every altar of your Church,
and I embrace you with all the affections of my soul.
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.***



GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH

ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

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Father Randall M. Graf, Priest & Rector

REGULAR WORSHIP SERVICES

Holy Eucharist

8:30 AM & 10:00 AM every Sunday

Red Letter Holy Days

12:15 PM or 6:30 PM

