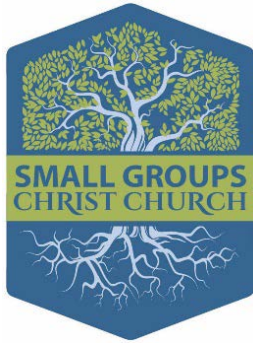


CHRIST CHURCH SMALL GROUPS

The Fourth Sunday of Easter – The Week beginning May 11, 2025



Read John 10:22-30:

At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one."

Background: In the tenth chapter of John's Gospel, the focus is on the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. This language is to be understood in the light of Old Testament ideas that God was the shepherd of Israel and that their kings were meant to follow his example. Often, they failed in this duty, and the people were abandoned. This explains the importance of Jesus describing himself as the shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep. In the text for today, the emphasis is on the relationship that must exist between Jesus and the members of his flock. They are known by Jesus (this is the intimate knowledge of friendship), and they listen to him and follow him on the path that leads to life. All of this is possible because Jesus is completely united with God his Father.

Talking Points:

- Why is there a reluctance among some of the Jews to believing Jesus?
- Jesus defines the relationship between himself and his followers as between that of a shepherd and his sheep. How is this helpful in aiding our understanding? Are we obedient to Jesus?
- What other shepherds—parents, teachers, community leaders, or spiritual guides—have you known in your life? How have they helped you?
- What has God the Father given Jesus?

Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.