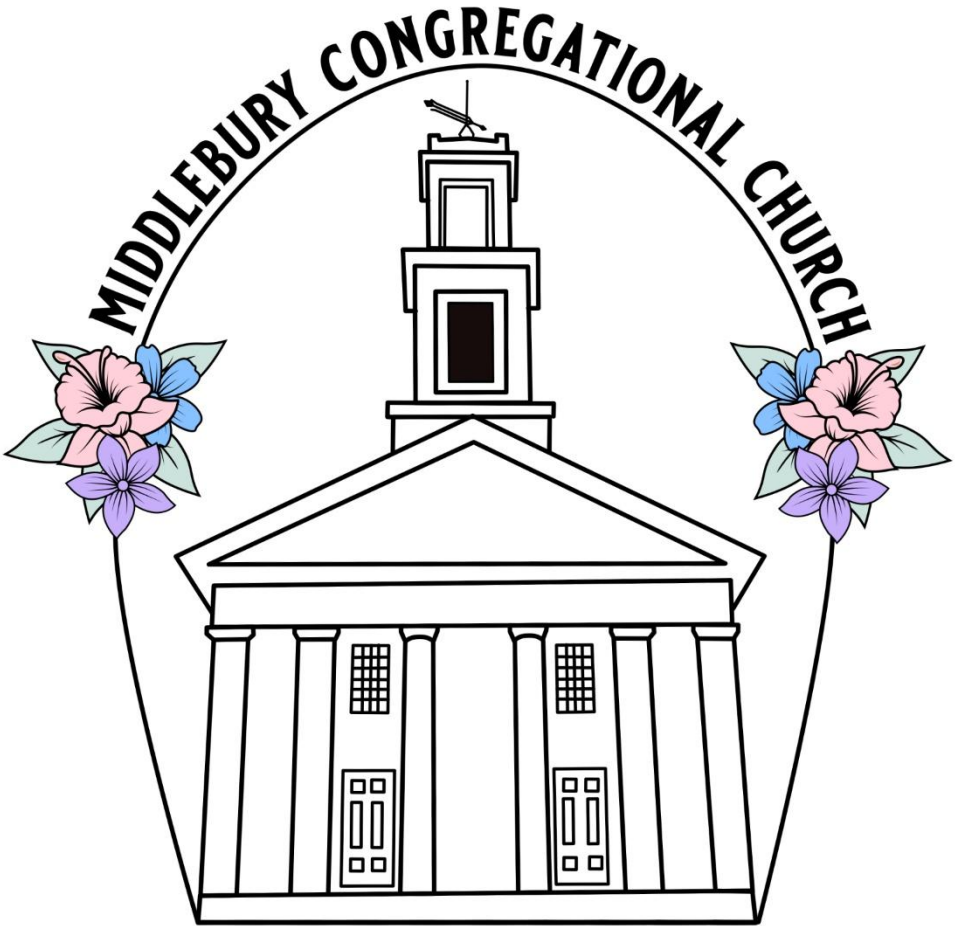


EASTERTIDE



**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
OPEN & AFFIRMING
MIDDLEBURYUCC.ORG**

**Middlebury Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
April 26, 2026
Fourth Sunday of Easter**

*all those who are able please stand

Our worship begins with the Prelude.

Please be mindful of those who wish to spend this time in prayer

PRELUDE

Good Christian Men, Rejoice and Sing! arr. Douglas Wagner

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Liturgist: Michele R. Finn

INTROIT

Adult Choir

He is risen! The Lord is risen indeed!

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist

Leader: The Lord Jesus Christ is our shepherd

People: He lays down his life for his sheep

Leader: The Lord Jesus Christ is our shepherd

People: He knows us, and we belong to him

Leader: The Lord Jesus Christ is our shepherd

People: He speaks, and we listen for his voice

***HYMN**

Good Christian Men, Rejoice and Sing! Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #184

INVOCATION

THE LORD'S PRAYER (UNISON)

Our Father, 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 and ever.

Amen. [We use “Father” and “trespasses,” but please use whatever words bring you closest to God.]

CALL TO CONFESSION (Based on Psalm 23:1,3)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (UNISON)

Almighty and merciful God, we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. O Lord, Amen. (Time for individual silent confession)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Based on 1 John 4:9-10)

Hear the good news: “God’s love was revealed to us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.” Friends, hear and believe the good news; in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI**

Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #513

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
World without end. Amen. Amen.

Children Pre-K through 7th grade may exit through the back doors of the sanctuary and meet in the Social Hall for Sunday School

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READINGS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

John 10:1-21

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. The

thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

Again the Jews were divided because of these words. Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is out of his mind. Why listen to him?” Others were saying, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

SERMON

The Rev. Katrina Manzi

Gates, Sheep, and Abundant Life

***HYMN**

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #80

JOYS, CONCERNS, & PASTORAL PRAYER

Prayer requests will be received from the congregation. Please be mindful worship is livestreamed, so we advise caution on using last names to preserve people's privacy.

OFFERTORY

Gaudeamus Hodie (Be Joyful Today)

Natalie Sleeth

Adult Choir

***Doxology in Unison**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below, Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise him above, ye heavenly hosts,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)**

Loving God, you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the good shepherd and, in his love for us, to lay down his life and rise again. Amen.

***HYMN**

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #327

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

Adult Choir

God be with you till we meet again;
By his counsels guide, uphold you,
With his sheep securely fold you,
God be with you till we meet again. Amen.

POSTLUDE

God Be With You Till We Meet Again arr. Marshall McDonald

*Please join us downstairs in the Social Hall after worship for
fellowship and refreshments*



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DOING GOD'S WORK

The Congregation, *Ministers in the World*
Church Officers & Members of our Boards & Committees

Staff:

The Rev. Katrina Manzi, *Minister*

Donna Obarowski, *Choir Director*

David Obarowski, *Organist*

Diane Barnard, *Bookkeeper/Asst. Treasurer*

Sara Hubbard, *Faith Formation Volunteer Coordinator*

Rebecca Trosan, *Nursery Attendant*

Sarah Kwashnak, *Office Assistant*