

## DEVOTION: The Lord is My Shepherd

Shepherds in Bible times always had to be on the lookout for members of the flock that needed their personal attention. They treated scratches with olive oil. They kept watch lest any sheep stray from the flock and brought back any that did. Daily the shepherd led his flock to feed in safe pastures and guided them to needed water. At night he brought the flock to a secure fold, counting to be sure that none were missing. Through the night he would watch over them and protect them from predators or thieves.

How much doesn't this sound like what our Lord does for us every second of our lives? HE is our shepherd. Now, the picture of a shepherd probably doesn't have the same meaning for us that it did for the earliest Christians. Shepherds were a part of daily life for many of them. Here was an example of our Lord's love and care that they could easily understand and picture in their minds.

A true shepherd would even give his life for the sheep if needed! As the Lord's sheep we needed our Good Shepherd to die for us and He willingly did. He took our transgressions--everything the old evil Foe could use to condemn us--and by His death forgave our every sin and gave us everlasting life rather than eternal death!

Through our Good Shepherd's death, everyone who trusts in Him is set free from every sin. Our Good Shepherd justified us from all things from which we could not be justified by the law. He was the perfect sacrifice for the guilt of mankind! Our Good Shepherd wants us to place all our trust and love, our whole life in His hands--knowing that He is our God and Savior. He understands our helplessness and weakness and promises that HE will never leave us nor forsake us!

The picture of a shepherd perfectly illustrates the relationship of love that exists between Jesus and us, His sheep. This relationship was guaranteed to us by the Father Himself on Easter. By Jesus' resurrection we have perfect confidence that all Jesus came to do stands forever fulfilled! Because Jesus lives, we are the sheep of His pasture! That's the joy, comfort, and certainty we have every day. We have peace with God knowing that every sin stands forgiven and forgotten. Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

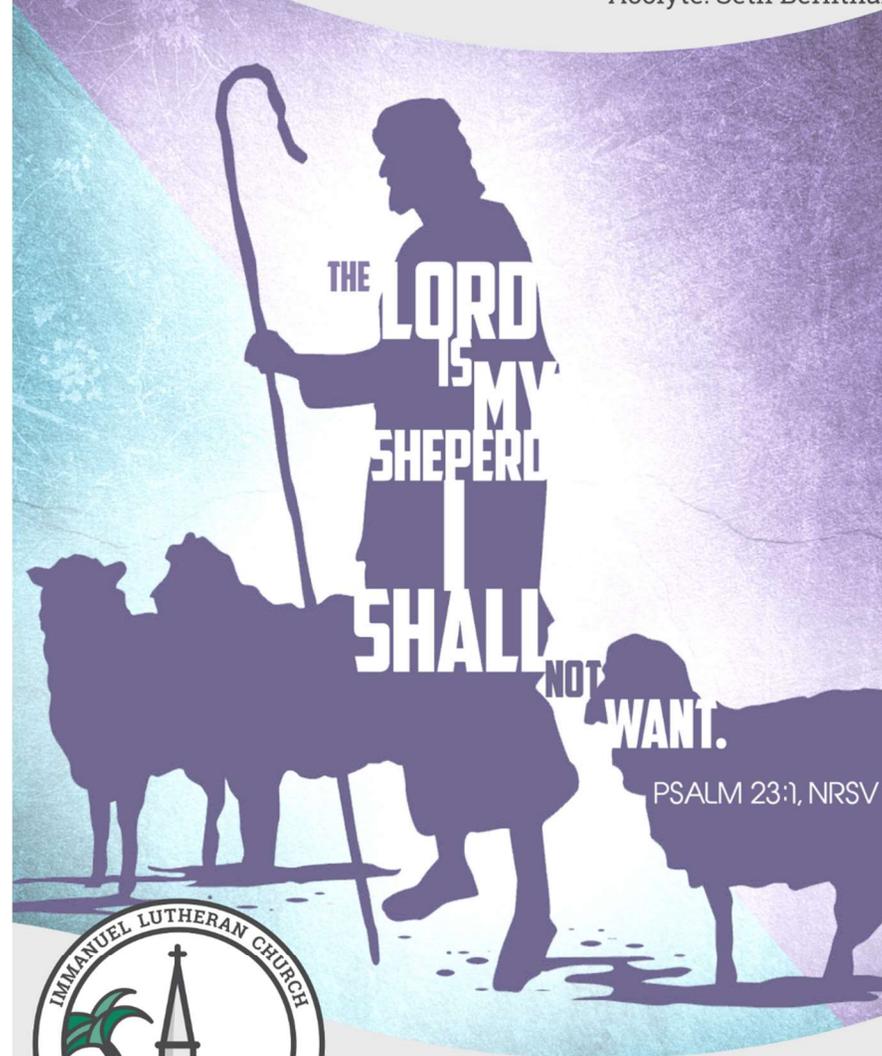
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Easter 4

Organist: Teresa Bernthal

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PSALM 23:1, NRSV



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## PRE-SERVICE MEDITATION

*Psalm 23*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. <sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. <sup>3</sup> He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. <sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. <sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. <sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

## ✠ Order of Divine Worship ✠

### OPENING PRAYER

**HYMN: TLH #192:1,6-8** "Awake, My Heart, with Gladness"

**P** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** *A - - - men.*

**P** Pastor

**C** Congregation

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION:

*We come before God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.*

**P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God, our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**C** *Who made heaven and earth.*

**P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.

**C** *And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*

**P** Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**C** **O most merciful God, who hast given Thine only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Thy Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of Thee and of Thy will and true obedience to Thy Word, to the end that by Thy grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**SERMON – 1 Peter 2:21-25** For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. <sup>23</sup> When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. <sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

## The Tell-tale Tracks of the Good Shepherd

I. See where they led Him for you

II. See where they lead you for Him!



### OFFERTORY

*In this prayer we OFFER God our hearts, asking Him for that best of all gifts, the Holy Spirit.*

**C** *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.*

**HYMN: TLH #51**

**"Now May He Who from the Dead"**

### PRAYER, LORD'S PRAYER, and BLESSING

**P** The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you His peace.

**C** *Amen, amen, a – men.*

**HYMN: TLH #436**

**"The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want"**

HYMN: Below

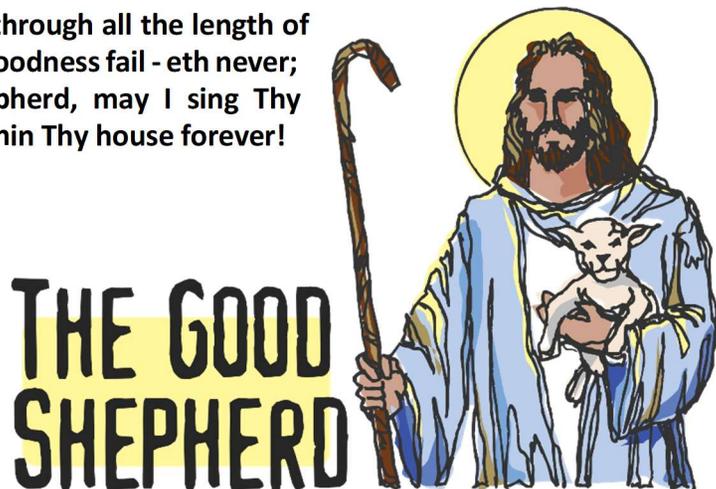
"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

1 The King of love my shep - herd is, Whose good - ness  
 2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, My ran - somed  
 3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, But yet in  
 4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill With Thee, dear

fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
 soul He lead - eth And, where the ver - dant  
 love He sought me And on His shoul - der  
 Lord, be - side me, Thy rod and staff my

I am His And He is mine for - ev - er.  
 pas - tures grow, With food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
 gent - ly laid And home re - joic - ing brought me.  
 com - fort still, Thy cross be - fore to guide me.

5. And so through all the length of days Thy goodness fail - eth never; Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise Within Thy house forever!



**P** Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in His name He gives power to become the sons of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

**C** ♪ A - - - men.

INTROIT

*Jn. 10:14-15; Psalm 78:70-72; 79:13*

*A collection of passages that set the tone for the service.*

**P** I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know Me, and I lay down My life for the sheep.

**C** He chose David His servant and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the nursing ewes He brought him to shepherd Jacob His people, Israel His inheritance.

**P** With upright heart he shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand.

**C** But we Your people, the sheep of Your pasture, will give thanks to You forever; from generation to generation we will recount Your praise.

**P** I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know Me, and I lay down My life for the sheep.

GLORIA PATRI

*Latin for "Glory be to the Father"*

**C** Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost;

as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

VERSE OF THE DAY

*Rom. 6:9; John 10:14*

**P** Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia. I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know me. Alleluia.

## THE KYRIE

*Latin for "O Lord"*

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -  
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

## GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

*TLH #237:1*

**♩ All glory be to God on high, Who hath our race befriended! To us no harm shall now come nigh, The strife at last is ended. God showeth His good will to men, And peace shall reign on earth again; O thank Him for His goodness!**

**P** Let us pray. Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him who calls us each by name and follow where He leads; This we pray through the Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and rules with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever.

**♩ A - - - men.**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING – Ezekiel 34:11-16** "For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. <sup>12</sup> As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. <sup>13</sup> And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. <sup>14</sup> I will feed them with good pasture, and on the

mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. <sup>15</sup> I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD. <sup>16</sup> I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.

**GOSPEL READING – John 10:1-10** "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup> But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." <sup>6</sup> This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. <sup>7</sup> So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

## CONFESSION OF FAITH

*The Apostles' Creed*

*The Apostles' Creed is a summary of Christian faith as taught by the Apostles.*

**I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**