

APRIL 30, 2023
FOURTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER



Jesus the Good Shepherd restores our souls.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 10:1-10	Christ the shepherd
Monday	Acts 2:42-47	Life among believers
Tuesday	1 Peter 2:19-25	Example of Christ's suffering
Wednesday	Matthew 11:28-30	Come and rest
Thursday	Psalms 100	The Lord is good
Friday	Colossians 3:15-17	New life in Christ
Saturday	Psalms 23	The Lord is my shepherd
Sunday	John 14:1-14	Jesus is the way, truth, and life

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

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.
Psalm 23:1-3a (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Loving God, you who care for all our needs, help us to trust in your goodness and mercy all the days of our lives through Christ Jesus, our Good Shepherd. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we give you thanks for this food. Help us to receive this gift of life with joy and gladness all our days through Christ Jesus, our Good Shepherd. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the goodness and mercy of the Good Shepherd follow you all the days of your life.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Shepherd Me, O God



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Describe what a day filled with contentment looks like.
- How does the church, the body of Christ, help you sense God's presence as your shepherd?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Acts 2:42-47.

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is always the Good Shepherd Sunday. All the readings for that day except Acts 2 use the image of shepherd. However, it is in Acts 2 that the people devote themselves to shepherding one another in the Christian faith. People are brought to homes and tables for food, fellowship, and acceptance (Psalm 23:5). In this intimate fellowship people are taught the faith by hearing the message of the apostles. People learn the faith from trusted voices within the community (John 10:4). They support one another with prayer and generosity. The community serves one another by providing material needs like food, clothing, and shelter. With compassionate hearts people praise God. They gain attention and in so doing, the sheepfold grows, and *"the Lord added to their number those who were being saved"* (Acts 2:47). The life of the community looks like followers of Jesus, the one who is the *"shepherd and guardian"* of our souls (1 Peter 2:25).

Discuss: How does the image of shepherd help you understand what it means to be part of the body of Christ?

Pray: **Dear Jesus, our Good Shepherd, we thank you for the church, the body of Christ, that cares for one another that we may believe in you and serve others in love. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how can you serve as a shepherd to someone by showing care and attending to their needs?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Faith is caught more than it is taught. Learning the faith begins in the home. As you continue to read the Gospel of John during the Easter season, think about what would happen if you "get caught" while reading the Bible when others are present. Consider doing so. This week highlight John 10:10b, *"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."* Read it aloud for someone this week and engage in a conversation about what it means to you to believe in Jesus. Invite that person to join you in saying: **Alleluia! Christ is risen. Alleluia!**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org