

## **Sunday 3rd May 2020**

(Prepared by Emily Spindler)

**Prayer:** Creator of the universe, you made the world in beauty, and restore all things in glory through the victory of Jesus Christ.

We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed, the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace, to the glory of your name. Amen.

(Revised Common Lectionary)

**Song:** Choose your own Worship Song.

**Psalm Reading:** Psalm 23

**Song:** WOW CD, Disc 1—Track 3. For The Beauty Of The Earth — BarlowGirl

**Bible Reading:** John 10:1-10

### **Reflection:**

Jesus was a master at using simple everyday objects or events to illustrate profound spiritual truths. In John 10, Jesus uses the scene of a shepherd enclosing his sheep in a sheepfold to give us one of the most moving pictures of our salvation and security in Christ.

Throughout the entirety of the Bible God (and Jesus) is often portrayed as a shepherd and the people as his flock. There are many examples of this particularly in Psalms (23:1, 77: 20, 79:13, 80:1, 95:7, 100:3) and throughout the gospels (Matt. 9:36, 18:12, 26.31; Mark 6:34, 14:27; Luke 12:32, 15:4; John 21:15-19), along with many other references throughout the Bible.

These examples show that the leader of the flock is the shepherd and that it is the duty of the shepherd to feed their flock, and to also provide them comfort. For the church, the leader is to nurture their people by providing spiritual comfort so that their people can grow to be healthy and happy spiritually. God also does this for us, as he sent his Holy Spirit to us so that we could continue to grow with him in our faith journeys, but we also need to be diligent in reading the scriptures and praying to God to get our spiritual feeding and growth.

It also the duty of the shepherd to also protect their flock from anything that would harm them such as wolves and thieves. Likewise, we are to be guarded from temptations and things that are impure in our lives. Our leaders, who are like our shepherds, are there to help us with these things. By praying, God can also give us strength and courage to stay strong against these temptations. Jesus, as the ultimate shepherd, was willing to sacrifice his life for us, so that we could be protected from the things that could harm us, so that we could be saved. He surrounds us in his love and protection (the sheepfold) so that we can grow, be nurtured by him and be safe with him.

**Questions:** Who is the one who enters through the door of the sheepfold? What are the characteristics of the one who enters through the door? Read John 10:3-5.

Why is it important for the sheep to know the voice of the shepherd? What can happen when the sheep do not recognize the voice of the shepherd? Why is it important for us to hear God's voice? How do we know we have heard God's voice?

**Song:** WOW CD, Disc 2—Track 12. Savior Like A Shepherd Lead Us — Todd Agnew

**Prayer:** Holy Shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, where we celebrate with you forever. Amen.

(Revised Common Lectionary)

