

MAY 12, 2019  
FOURTH SUNDAY  
OF EASTER

# taking faith home

*The Lord is my shepherd.*

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>John 10:22-30</b>	<b>Jesus promises life to his sheep</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Acts 9:36-43</b>	<b>Peter brings Dorcas back to life</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Revelation 7:9-17</b>	<b>The multitude from every nation</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Ezekiel 34:11-31</b>	<b>God, the true shepherd</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Luke 12:22-34</b>	<b>Do not worry</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Isaiah 40:1-11</b>	<b>God's people are comforted</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 23</b>	<b>The Lord is my shepherd</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>John 13:31-35</b>	<b>Love one another</b>

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. **Psalm 23:1 (NRSV)**

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

### **A Prayer for the Week:**

God of goodness and mercy, thank you for your shepherding love that pursues us all the days of our lives. Amen.

### **Mealttime Prayer:**

Shepherd God, we thank you that our cup overflows with your never-failing love that pursues us with goodness, mercy, and this gift of food. Amen. (Psalm 23:5-6)

### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the Good Shepherd make you lie down by green pastures, lead you beside still waters, and restore your soul. (Psalm 23:2-3)



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## HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Children of the  
Heavenly Father*



## CARING CONVERSATIONS



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

- What gives you a sense of calm?
- How have you experienced comfort during difficult times?
- God is your Good Shepherd who restores your soul. What does this mean to you?

## DEVOTIONS



*Read:* Psalm 23.

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is the Good Shepherd Sunday. Some part of John 10 and Psalm 23 are always part of these lectionary texts. The passages connect the resurrection life celebrated throughout the Easter season with God's providential care that provides security in the midst of tough times and a promised future of peace. Psalm 23 is a psalm of trust in the midst of crisis. However, the crisis here is not clearly identified. There are allusions to the forty years of exodus wanderings. The theme of needing nothing in verse one is paralleled in Nehemiah 9:21 where for forty years the people "lacked nothing," the same Hebrew word translated as "shall not want" in Psalm 23:1. While difficult times—the darkest valley—beset all people, including all of God's people, faith in Christ still allows one to see and experience beauty and peace. The term "follow" in verse six also means "pursue." Here it is contrasted with its usual Old Testament association of being pursued by an enemy. Even more, in this psalm we are pursued by the love and protection of our Good Shepherd. When you read Psalm 23, what words stood out for you? How do those words relate to what you are now experiencing in your life?

*Pray:* **Good Shepherd, give me eyes to see and a heart to believe that you have set green pastures and still waters before me and that your goodness and mercy pursue me always. Amen.**

## SERVICE



In the story of Peter bringing Dorcas back to life, we are told: "Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity" (Acts 9:36). Dorcas was well loved by her neighbors as a result of her generosity and acts of kindness for others. Cooking a meal for someone, babysitting for free, walking for a good cause, sending a care package, or some other act of kindness all show God's love to others. What random acts of kindness can you do this week to surprise a friend or neighbor?

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Jesus is often referred to as "The Good Shepherd." Some of the earliest Christian art and the most represented art found in catacombs shows this. It has been a tradition for artists around the world to paint Jesus as a shepherd. Do you have a picture like this in your home? If not, find several different pieces or artwork showing Jesus as a shepherd. What is different about the pictures? What is the same? Describe how Jesus is caring for his sheep in each piece of artwork. Describe how Jesus cares for you. Make a list of ways you show care for others. How does your list compare to how Jesus cares for us?

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

