

APRIL 22, 2018  
FOURTH SUNDAY  
OF EASTER

# taking<sup>+</sup> faith home

*Faith is formed through personal, trusted relationships.*

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	John 10:11-18	The Good Shepherd
Monday	Acts 4:5-12	Peter and John before the council
Tuesday	1 John 3:16-24	Love one another
Wednesday	Genesis 48:8-21	God has been my shepherd
Thursday	Ezekiel 34:11-24	God will look after God's sheep
Friday	Mark 6:30-34	Jesus, the compassionate shepherd
Saturday	Psalm 23	The divine shepherd
Sunday	John 15:1-8	Jesus the true vine

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

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. **John 10:14-15 (NRSV)**

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

### A Prayer for the Week:

Jesus, our Good Shepherd, thank you for being with us, especially when we are going through difficult times. Amen.

### Mealtime Prayer:

Jesus, our Good Shepherd, thank you for feeding us, protecting us, and loving us. May we always listen to you and follow you. Amen.

### A Blessing to Give:

May God's kindness and love be with you each day of your life, and may you live forever with the Lord. (Psalm 23:6)



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## HYMN OF THE WEEK

*The Lord's My Shepherd*

## CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- What is it about someone that makes you want to trust that person?
- Who do you listen to in a trusting way? Who listens to you and trusts you? Why is this so?
- Jesus says that he lays down his life for his sheep (John 10:14-15). How does Jesus lay down his life for you? How does that help you trust in him and our heavenly Father?

## DEVOTIONS



*Read:* John 10:11-18 or read about Jesus as the Good Shepherd in a storybook Bible.

Talk about what it means to listen to Jesus' voice and to follow him as sheep of the Good Shepherd. Play a game of "Follow the Leader." Blindfold all the followers and have the leader guide them using only his or her voice. Jesus says that other sheep will be added to his flock and they will listen to his voice. Reflect on how you listen to Jesus' voice today.

*Pray:* Jesus, our Good Shepherd, thank you for being with us, especially when we are going through difficult times. Amen.

## SERVICE



Psalm 23 points out how difficult times (walking through the "darkest valley") is an important time to experience a trusted relationship with God ("I fear no evil; for you are with me"). Be a servant of God's presence by reaching out to someone going through a difficult time. Visit that person, listen to him or her, and offer a prayer that expresses trust in the Good Shepherd who walks with us through our darkest valleys.

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Psalm 23 is one of the most familiar passages in the Bible. It speaks to people in all times and in all places. Memorize or recite Psalm 23 and make it part of your routine of prayer and meditation. Psalm 23:1 is a good verse to go to sleep each night, by breathing in and thinking, "The Lord is my shepherd." As you exhale, then recall the words, "I shall not want."