

Sermon 26 April 2026 – Family Sunday. The Good Shepherd

By Revd. Karen Adendorff

How are you this morning? ... Good!

But tell me—do you always feel good? ... No, not always, right?

What are some things that make you worried? ...

And what are some things that make you feel afraid? ...

Thank you for sharing. Those feelings are very real, and we all have them sometimes – even grown-ups.

Today's Bible readings are for anyone who has ever felt scared or lost. They tell us about a Shepherd.

Does anyone know what a shepherd does all day? Yes! Yes! A shepherd takes care of sheep all day. Sheep need a lot of help—they get scared easily, they wander off, and they don't always make good choices. So, the shepherd protects them and shows them where to go.

And you know what? We are a bit like sheep too. Sometimes we get distracted...sometimes we follow the wrong crowd...sometimes we feel scared or lost. But the good news is that Jesus is our Shepherd.

Do you remember which Psalm we read this morning? That's right. Psalm 23. Let's see what it teaches us:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Hmm... does that mean we get everything we want? ... No?

It means Jesus gives us everything we need. Everything that is best for us. Just like your parents take care of you so Jesus also takes care of us because He loves us.

He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters.

What do sheep need? ... Food, water, rest!

Think about break time at school—you run, play, laugh... and then you get tired. God knows we need rest too. Quiet time with God—like praying or being still—helps us calm down.

He restores my soul and leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

Who knows what “restore” means? ... Yes—to make better again! God helps us when we feel tired, sad, or upset. It’s like he gives us energy again and points us in the right direction, so we don’t get lost in those “bad choices” we sometimes make!

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 comfort me.

That sounds scary, doesn’t it? Like the fears you mentioned earlier, hey. But what’s important to remember is that God is with us.

A shepherd has two tools: A Rod (a heavy stick to chase away wolves) to protect the sheep from danger and a Staff (a long stick with a hook) - to guide them and pull them back when they’re in trouble.

That’s what Jesus does—He protects us and guides us so that we can make good choices.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil and my cup overflows.

This tells us that God doesn’t just give us a “little bit” of love. He gives us so much that it spills over the top of the cup! Even when others are being mean to us, God loves us and comforts us because we matter to Him.

Surely your goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Imagine God’s love following you everywhere, everyday – like a best friend - at school, at home, when you’re happy, and even when you’re scared.

So, what does this all mean? It means life won’t always be easy—but we have a Shepherd who knows us by name, who loves us, and stays close to us no matter what.

Let us pray

Dear God, thank you for being our Shepherd. Thank you for loving us and protecting us when we are scared. Thank you for finding us when we are lost. Help us to listen for your voice and trust you every day.

Amen.