

Worship Suggestions

Good Shepherd Sunday SEASON 2024 w/ LSSI

For use with other resources available at LSSI.org/GSS

NOTE: *The suggestions here are based on the Revised Common Lectionary scriptures assigned for April 21, 2024, known as Good Shepherd Sunday. LSSI encourages congregations to use this theme anytime during the Easter Season, from April 7 – May 12, and adjust the lectionary-based scriptures and themes accordingly.*

Call to Worship¹

Day by day, God leads us:

to the deep, deep pools of peace, to the green, lush lawns of grace.

Day by day, Jesus calls us:

to pour ourselves out in service, to anoint the stranger with hope.

Day by day, the Holy Spirit shows us:

the community we could be, the family we are called to become.

Prayer of Confession²

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, our loving Shepherd, who creates us, redeems us, and calls us by name.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving Lord,

You are the Shepherd, and we are your flock, but we admit the times we have tried to take your place and take control ourselves. We admit that we have not always trusted your good news to be good for us. At times, we have pleaded with you to care for us, but we have ignored the needs of others. Lord, have mercy upon us. Teach us by the Holy Spirit to follow You, trusting that you are always leading us along the right pathways.

Beloved of God:

Once we were like lost sheep who wandered away. But no longer! Our Shepherd God has restored our souls, covered us in righteousness, and continued to lavish love and goodness upon us, so that we can spend eternity in the presence of God's unfailing love. Thanks be to God! **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day³

Loving Shepherd, you know our names; you care for us. When we face darkness and death, walk beside us. When we hunger for your love, fill us with your presence. When we are fearful, feed us at your table. May we dwell in the house of goodness and mercy all the days of our lives. Amen.

¹ written by Thom Shuman on

² inspired by the words of Rev Dan Carmichael, church of Scotland

³ by Mary Petrina Boyd, www.ministrymatters.com

Scripture Suggestions *from the Revised Common Lectionary for April 21, 2024*

Acts 4:5-12 (Common English Bible) *optional*

[In Acts 3; last week's reading] Peter and John healed a man unable to walk and then preached to the people gathered in the temple in Jerusalem, describing how Jesus had fulfilled God's promises. But then Peter and John were arrested. In today's reading, Peter is filled with the Holy Spirit so that he can proclaim salvation in Jesus' name to the religious authorities.⁴

⁵ The next day the leaders, elders, and legal experts gathered in Jerusalem, ⁶ along with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas (who had ordered Jesus' crucifixion), as well as John, Alexander, and others from the high priest's family. ⁷ They had Peter and John brought before them and asked, "By what power or in what name did you [heal and preach]?"

⁸ Then Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, answered, "Leaders of the people and elders, ⁹ are we being examined today because something good was done for a sick person, a good deed that healed him? ¹⁰ If so, then you and all the people of Israel need to know that this man stands healthy before you because of the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹ This Jesus is the stone you builders rejected; [and now] he has become the cornerstone! ¹² Salvation can be found in no one else. Throughout the whole world, no other name has been given among humans through which we must be saved."

Psalm: Psalm 23 [New Revised Standard Version]

¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

²**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

³You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

Second Reading: 1 John 3:16-24 [New Revised Standard Version] *optional*

¹⁶We know love by this, that [Jesus Christ] laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him ²⁰whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ

and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

⁴ Introduction from SundaysandSeasons.com

Gospel: John 10:1-18 (New Revised Standard Version)

[Jesus said:] ¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

Sermon Video

Links: [Download a Copy](#) (Select the three dots in the bottom right corner and click download from the menu that appears.) | [Watch on YouTube](#)

Suggested introduction for Mark Stutrud’s video sermon:

The Gospel for today is taken from the 10th chapter of John, verses 11-18.

Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. 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. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

Our sermon today is a video recording from Mark Stutrud, who is the President and CEO of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, or “LSSI”. LSSI is the social ministry organization of the three ELCA synods in Illinois, which means it is also **[congregation’s name]’s** social ministry organization.

We join hundreds of other congregations across the state in supporting LSSI’s programs for foster care, mental health and substance use treatment, low-income housing, programs for families impacted by incarceration, and residential homes for people with physical and

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intellectual disabilities. Today, we celebrate that partnership and give thanks to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who cares for all of us as one flock.

And now, we will hear from Mark Stutrud. [Play Sermon Video]

Affirmation: This I Believe⁵

I believe I need a shepherd.
Because I am sometimes timid and other times overconfident,
because I often don't know the best path yet pretend I do,
because I rush into dead ends or lead others into hazardous places,
because my brightest ideas are seamed with darkness,
because the things I crave may not be what is good for me,
I need a shepherd.

I believe in Jesus, the best possible shepherd;
his wisdom leads me to the best opportunities,
his word comforts me when I'm anxious or afraid,
his arm steadies me when I feel weary and heavy-laden,
his wounded body displays the cost of my rescue.

I believe in Jesus, the best possible shepherd.
I believe that I do not find him but he finds me,
that I under his care by virtue of sheer grace,
the love he gives me is to be shared with others,
that he treasures my name and prepares a place for me,
that his fold transfixes earth and heaven.
I trust Jesus, the good shepherd. Amen.

Prayer Petition *For inclusion with the Prayers of Intercession or Prayers of the People*

Compassionate God, bless Lutheran Social Services of Illinois for all the ministry work they do every day. Empower all churches in our state to support their work in a generous way, so that they can continue their mission of helping others.
Hear us O God, **your mercy is great.**

Offering Prayer⁶

God of love, you abide with us; you provide for all our needs and guide us in your ways. Out of gratitude for your care, we bring our gifts before you. Use them for your work of caring, that all may feast at the table of abundance, walk without fear, and drink deeply from the cup of compassion. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Our loving Shepherd prepares this table and invites everyone to the banquet of life.

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Prayer after Communion⁷

⁵ Copyright © 2002 Bruce D. Prewer; <http://www.bruceprewer.com/>

⁶ written by Mary Petrina Boyd, and posted on

⁷ from SundaysandSeasons.com

Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**

Song Suggestions for Good Shepherd Sunday Celebrations

- *Build a Longer Table* – All Creation Sings (ACS) #1062
- *Come, Share the Spirit* – All Creation Sings (ACS) #1045
- *You Lord are Both Lamb and Shepherd* – All Creation Sings (ACS) #954

- *My Shepherd You Supply My Need* – Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) #438
- *Will You Let Me Be Your Servant* – Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) #659
- *Shepherd Me O God* – Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) #423

- *Lead on Good Shepherd* by Patrick Mayberry – CCLI#7209206
- *They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* by Peter Scholtes
- *Lay Me Down* by Chris Tomlin – CCLI # 6223577