



## Wednesday Prayer

19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – The Good Shepherd

### *Psalm 23*

***The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff--they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.***

For many, these words conjure up a comforting image of our relationship with the Lord unmatched by any in scripture. Christians frequently cast Jesus as the shepherd, although these words were written long before his birth.

I tell the story of the Good Shepherd to very young children while moving figures of a shepherd and sheep on a green felt field of grass spread on the floor. The shepherd calls the sheep from the sheepfold and leads them to the green grass and the cool water. And when they come to “the places of darkness,” she shows the way to go through until they are safely back home.

The sheep follow the good shepherd because they “know the sound” of the shepherd’s voice. And if one of the sheep loses its way in the shadows, the shepherd will look everywhere until she finds the sheep and carries it home.

My friend’s daughter recently completed an open adoption where she held the young mother’s hand through labor and delivery. The mother who was giving the baby to her said, “No one has ever held my hand when I’ve gone through pain before.”

I tell the story of the Good Shepherd over and over because I want children to know deep in their hearts that no matter what places of fear or evil or pain they experience, the good shepherd will leave the other sheep to go and find them, and take them by the hand or carry them safely home where the shepherd is so happy that she calls the community together and they have a feast to celebrate.

**Good Shepherd, help us shepherd your lambs so that they know the sound of your voice, and trust that you will always come and find them and lead them safely home. Amen.**

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~Enjoy this moving performance of the [23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm with Bobby McFerrin featuring SLIXS & friends](#).

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