



Living in the Spirit
◆ **4th Sunday of Easter – Jesus, Gentle Shepherd**

Call to Prayer and Sharing

❖ *Invitation to Prayer - Leader*

Let us begin,
Now, here in this place
With a moment of silence, to reflect,
to focus, to be attentive to ourselves,
to one another, and to the presence of Christ.

May the Lord come and increase our faith. *(reflective pause)*

❖ *Opening Song - If time allows, sing a familiar hymn or song.*

❖ *Then: "In the name of the Father and of the Son"*

The Word of God

❖ *Leader: Let us welcome God's Word into our hearts.*

○ *Sing to the melody of "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow".*

Open our minds to, know you Lord;
Open our hearts to, hear your voice;
Open our hearts now, to your Word;
Come to us now, O Lord, our God.

From John 10:11 – 18 (The Good Shepherd)

Jesus said:

"I am the good shepherd.
A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
A hired man, who is not a shepherd
and whose sheep are not his own,
sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away,
and the wolf catches and scatters them.
This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.
I am the good shepherd,
and I know mine and mine know me,
just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;
and I will lay down my life for the sheep.
I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold.
These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice,
and there will be one flock, one shepherd.
This is why 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 on my own.
I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again.
This command I have received from my Father."

The Word of the Lord...

❖ *At the conclusion of the reading, briefly pause for quiet reflection.*

Faith Sharing/Question of the Week (consider sharing on ***either*** question)

- ❖ **Adult:** What qualities of God does the image of the Good Shepherd call forth for you?
- ❖ **Mixed Ages:** What does it mean when Jesus tells us he is the Good Shepherd?

For further reflection and discussion

- ❖ How does this influence and affect what we are doing here at this gathering?

Time is provided for sharing responses to the question. Silence between responses is to be expected. Allow a few minutes for faith sharing. For larger groups, leader invites members to divide into groups of 3 or 4 for faith sharing.

- ❖ *When the sharing comes to an end, the leader invites everyone to take a moment to silently and reverently hold what has been shared together.*

Litany of Faith

Leader: Christ Jesus, you call our name and we listen to your voice.
Come and shepherd us back to you.

All: Jesus, gentle shepherd, lead us back to you.

Leader: Christ Jesus, you walk with us, and we feel your friendship.
Come and shepherd us back to you.

All: Jesus, gentle shepherd, lead us back to you.

Leader: Christ Jesus, you are the opening for us to grow by faith.
Come and shepherd us back to you.

All: Jesus, gentle shepherd, lead us back to you.

The Lord's Prayer

Leader: Let us pray together:

All: Gracious God,
we know that you are with us here,
and we have taken your Word into our hearts.
You call us all to conversion,
we who are here in this place,
and we who are now ready to welcome you into our lives.
We are ready,
we are willing,
and we are yours.
So we surrender to you
our aches and longings into one as we pray:
Our Father...

Continue with the Meeting

Final Blessing

Leader: Now let us bless one another:

All: May God bless and keep us, may God smile upon us.
May God show us kindness, fill us with peace.
And may God bless us, Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
may we always love and serve,
filled with God's Peace. Amen.

Leader: *Conclude the meeting or sing a closing song.*