

Thursday, April 29

Once again, read Psalm 23 and review the reading from Tuesday, John 10:1-21. The Good Shepherd is also a healer and host. The anointing mentioned in Psalm 23 is for both medicinal purposes as well as welcoming people into your home. In Psalm 147, the writer says of our heavenly shepherd, “He heals the broken-hearted, and binds up their wounds” (v. 3). Our injuries may be of the body, soul or spirit. Our suffering might be physical, or it might be psychological. The shepherd knows how to heal wounds, where to pour the oil. The shepherd knows where it hurts.

A good host in Biblical days would provide for guests to have their feet washed and would anoint them with sweet smelling oil. Psalm 23 speaks of the shepherd who ushers the sheep into their eternal home where this kind act of anointing is provided. After a long and painful illness, death is often viewed as the ultimate healing as a believer enters into life eternal. How do you see the shepherd as healer and host? Meditate on the words above and record your thoughts here.

Friday, April 30

Read Psalm 23 and review the attributes of a Good Shepherd. Meditate on the caring ministries of our church. Pastor Jack is certified in the area of Spiritual Formation and Rev. Cora also has experience in this area of ministry. One of the goals of Central Church this year and into next year is to create a system of Congregational Care. Pastor Jack asked for volunteers to help create a vision for this ministry in our church family.

Consider what it would mean for you to be a part of the creation of this system of Congregational Care. What would it mean to be a participant in providing care for our faith community? Meditate on your gifts and grace that could make a difference in your life and in the lives of others! Then, if you are interested, make a call!

Message Notes – April 25, 2021

*Field Trip or Trippin' in the Field?**

- I. I'd like for us to think of Psalm 23 as a sort of _____. But instead of a teacher, the leader of this field trip is called “My _____.”
 - A. The 30 or so third-graders are _____.
 - B. The shepherd, being a good shepherd, knows that anything and everything might go _____.
 - C. The shepherd has so many _____.
 - D. The shepherd is a long held metaphor for _____ and the _____ of God's people.
 - E. King _____, to whom the Psalms are attributed, used the image of shepherd in the Psalms.
 - F. The name, “_____ Shepherd,” has a direct connection with Central United Methodist Church, friends.

- II. We want to make sure that the sheep are _____ and cared for so that they can enjoy the field trip and not be trippin' in the field! The shepherd, like the _____, has some very specific responsibilities.
 - A. First, the shepherd _____.

 - B. Second, shepherds _____.

 - C. Third, shepherds are _____.

*Psalm 23

- III. The ultimate goal, after having a safe, educational, fun and exciting field trip, is to get the children _____ safely.
- A. The shepherd leads the sheep home, where the shepherd acts as a _____.
1. David has already alluded to the Shepherd as a _____ with his references to a _____ that is prepared.
 2. David uses this as a metaphor for our _____ home.
- B. The _____ and _____ of the Good Shepherd – provider, protector, healer and host – are tasks that we all need to be about as Central U.M.C.
- C. One of our goals at Central Church is to create a system of Congregational _____.
- D. Thankfully, we have a _____ and caring congregation.
- E. Anyone up for a _____ _____?

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, April 26

Read Psalm 23. Since this beloved Psalm is so well known, you may want to read it slowly and deliberately. Meditate upon these wonderfully comforting words.

The message began with the metaphor of a shepherd taking the sheep out of the fold as a field trip. There are a lot of responsibilities for both the shepherd and the teacher and chaperones on a field trip. Although the message explored some of those responsibilities, what ideas do you have in terms of what makes for a successful and safe field trip? Meditate on this metaphor and write your ideas here.

Tuesday, April 27

Read John 10:1-21. The image of the “Good Shepherd” is in contrast to the worthless shepherd mentioned elsewhere in our scriptures (Zechariah 11:17 for example). The message mentioned that Central Church became known as “The Church of the Good Shepherd” in connection to the wonderful relief sculpture on the front of our church building.

Look over John 10 and identify the attributes that make for a Good Shepherd. Write them down below and add any other attributes that you believe would make for a Good Shepherd. Consider how these attributes would make for a good leader in the church. Pray that God utilize these attributes in our church to create a safe and welcoming fellowship.

Wednesday, April 28

Read Psalm 23 and review the reading from yesterday, John 10:1-21. Two of the tasks of a Good Shepherd are providing and protecting. Think how a teacher or chaperone on a field trip needs to provide and protect the children entrusted to them. How do those tasks relate to a shepherd? How do the tasks of the shepherd described in Psalm 23 relate to providing and protecting sheep?

Think of what the shepherd “makes” the sheep do; “he makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths.” How responsive are you to these measures of providing and protecting? Do you get enough rest? Do you take time to refresh and restore your soul? Meditate on these questions and write your thoughts here.