



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

April 21, 2024 A.D.

Good Shepherd Sunday

This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the Psalm and other parts of the service may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Psalm

Psalm 23 (KJV)

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:

He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul:

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;

Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:

Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:

And I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located on Bethany's website (www.bethanycr.org) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Nicene Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson

(John 10:11-18)

¹¹[Jesus said:] "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing 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. ¹⁶And I have other sheep that are not of 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 that I may take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

Sermon

✠ The Good Shepherd ✠ *(A copy is included at the end of this service.)*

The Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.**



The Lord's Prayer



**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Bethany's Prayer List

Entrusting into God's Care

- Jena (friend of Ann Balvanz) - hospice care
- Vic (friend of Ken Armbrecht) - hospice care
- Chuck Stoelting - hospice care
- Mickie Sjullie - employment search
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Sharon Ramsey - upcoming surgery 4/26
- Debbie (sister of Phil Hedtke) - health issues
- David (father of Chris Frampton) - health issues
- Tina Freese - recovering after surgery
- Bonnie Bubke - recovering after hospitalization
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Erin Wilson - recovering after surgery
- Marvie Foreman - recovering after surgery
- Aaron Moffett - recovering after eye surgery
- Ron Prescott - health issues
- Kris Dunn - recovering after surgery
- Kim Neuhaus - recovering after surgery
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment

Homebound

- Verlyn & Paul LeFevere - at home

Mourning, friends and family of

- Jeffrey Jasper - died 4/13
- Rev. Paul Scheidt (Asst. Pastor at Bethany 2000-2010) - died 4/5

Serving Our Country

- Amber (daughter of Ann Balvanz) - US Army, stationed in RI
- Ben (son of Kroemers) - IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - IA Army National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, stationed in TX
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - IA National Guard
- Devon (friend of Hedtkes and Chitticks) - deployed to Korea

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him who calls us each by name and follow where He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Together we pray... **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



✠ The Good Shepherd ✠

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

In the Spring of 1865, with the Civil War all but over, the Union Army under General Grant was slowly but surely surrounding the ever shrinking Army of Northern Virginia. One day, along the Appomattox River, as the Union army closed in around the Confederates who were outnumbered almost 5 to 1, a young confederate soldier was seen running away from the frontline. One of his fellow soldiers called out, asking him why he was running. He replied without breaking stride, "I'm running because I can't fly!"

During the American Civil War, soldiers from both the Union and the Confederacy were known for their bravery. For four years across the country, thousands upon thousands of men would line up in formation and march forward into a hail of bullets and artillery facing almost certain death. But despite their bravery and their love of their country, in most battles there would eventually come a time, sometimes after a few days, sometimes after only a few minutes, where the men on one side or the other would turn and run. They were not proud of this. In fact

sometimes the men would run backwards, not wanting their bodies to be found later with a bullet wound in the back, the tell tale sign of someone who ran from battle. Yet when the lines were broken and the battle was lost, men in both blue and in gray often ran from their enemies and for their lives.

Today in our Gospel lesson, Jesus identifies Himself as the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd who does not run away from danger, but rather runs to it and is willing to lay down His life. The Good Shepherd does not lay His life down for some sort of glory or personal gain, nor for love of country or even the idea of freedom, but rather He lays it down so that the sheep may live.

This stands in stark contrast to what Jesus calls the hired hand. In verse 12 Jesus says, “*He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.*” This is not to say that the hired hand is a bad or an evil person, it is just a fact. No hired hand made enough money to give up his life for a few sheep. During the same time the Mishnah, a collection of early Jewish traditions and regulations, said that one being paid to watch sheep was required to stay and fight for the sheep if one wolf attacked the flock. But if there were two, it was to be considered an unfortunate accident, and the one tending the flock could run away without facing ridicule or scorn. Also, when a hired hand, or even a shepherd for that matter, did die guarding the sheep it was considered a terrible tragedy. Sheep were valued back in those days, but no sheep was worth a man’s life.

And so, when Jesus said that He is the Good Shepherd and that the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep, this was something quite extraordinary for people to hear. And this is all the more so, when we consider just who these sheep are that the Good Shepherd is laying His life down for.

For centuries, Christians have found comfort in this image of Jesus being the Good Shepherd. But if Jesus is the Good Shepherd, than that means that we are the sheep. Contrary to what the world or our own egos tell us, we are the defenseless creatures who become lost and get into all sorts of trouble. This happens to us because of our own sinful nature and our rebellion against God.

But Jesus tells us that He is this Good Shepherd. And not only did He tell us, but He also showed us when He died on the cross for us – the sinful sheep. As He says in v.18 of our text, no one took Jesus’ life from Him. He was not killed as a result of our sinfulness. Rather, He gave up His life so that our sin could be taken away. As unpleasant as it might be to think of ourselves as sheep who cannot help ourselves, how wonderful it is to know that our Good Shepherd, that the Son of God Himself, would die so that our sins would be forgiven and we might live.

As we go through our lives as sheep, battling against all of our foes that would lead us away from God and into the very real trouble of sin, there is no doubt that our Good Shepherd, who did not turn away from the scorn and shame of the cross, will never run away and desert us. And even when we fail in doing what we should, and loose our battles with temptation and evil, Jesus is still our Good Shepherd. He did not run away when the time came to save us from sin, but He willingly laid down His life, so that we could be saved. But even more than that, Christ not only laid down His life, He took it up again when He rose on Easter Morning. His resurrection from the dead is proof that our battles with sin and death have already been won, even when it seems all is lost. For Jesus, our Good Shepherd has laid down His life and taken it up again. And all who listen to His voice, listen to Him telling us of His love. And all who hear that voice and believe it are forgiven their sin and have eternal life. Amen.