

Worship Service
Proper 12, 8th Sunday of Pentecost

Theme: "God Will Show Us the Path to Take"

WE GATHER AS GOD'S CHILDREN

Gathering Song: "**Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down**"

Come let us worship and bow down
Let us kneel before the Lord
Our God our Maker
Come let us worship and bow down
Let us kneel before the Lord
Our God our Maker
For He is our God
And we are the people of His pasture
And the sheep of His hand
Just the sheep of His hand

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Call to Worship (from Psalm 100)

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.
**Worship the Lord with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.**
Know that the Lord is God.
It is he who made us and we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.
**For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.**

*Song of Praise: "**All People That on Earth Do Dwell**" BoP#65

God's Greeting (from 2 Corinthians 13:14):

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

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and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

We Pass the Peace of Christ to Our Neighbour

WE ARE RECONCILED TO GOD

Prayer of Confession in Word and Song:

Refrain:

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,
beyond my fears, from death into life.

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L: O God our great Shepherd, you tenderly gather us as lambs, carrying us with your all-embracing love. Yet, like sheep, we wander from you: following our own ways, ignoring your voice, distrusting your provisions. Forgive our stubborn rebellion, our hardened hearts, our lack of trust. Refresh us once again by your quiet waters of mercy and restore our souls by your redeeming love. Guide our paths, that we might follow you more closely.

Refrain:

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,
beyond my fears, from death into life.

L: Tender Shepherd, hear now our silent prayers of confession and petition ... Lord, hear our prayers.

Silent Prayers of Confession

Refrain:

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,
beyond my fears, from death into life.

Words of Assurance (inspired by Psalm 23, John 10:22-30, Revelation 7:9-17):

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Even in the darkest valley,
though death's shadow may threaten us,
we need not fear, for the Lord is with us.
God will comfort and shelter us.
No harm will come to us.
No one can snatch us out of the Lord's hand.
God will wipe away every tear from our eyes.
Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

Song of Commitment: **“Be the Centre”**

1 Jesus be the Centre
Be my Source be my Light
Jesus

2 Jesus be the centre
Be my hope be my song
Jesus

Chorus
Be the fire in my heart
Be the wind in these sails
Be the reason that I live
Jesus Jesus

3 Jesus be my vision
Be my path be my guide
Jesus

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A Time of Sharing with the Youth

Youth Song: **“We Will Follow”**

1 We will follow, we will follow Jesus.
We will follow, we will follow him.

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We will follow, we will follow Jesus.
We will follow Jesus where he leads us.

2 Through the valleys, we will follow Jesus...

3 To the mountains, we will follow Jesus...

4 In the city, we will follow Jesus...

5 In our classroom, we will follow Jesus...

6 In our calling, we will follow Jesus...

WE SHARE IN GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Understanding

Psalm 23 in Word

John 10: 11-15

Psalm 23 in Song (Emily Kaldewey): The Lord's My Shepherd *F. Jolley*

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Sermon: "God's Way, our Path to Life"

Text: Psalm 23

Theme: "God's Way, our Path to Life"

Psalm 23 falls in book 1 of the Psalms and book 1 depicts in large part David's cry for mercy as he is perused by Saul whose intent was to destroy the eminent King of Israel.

"Millions of people have memorized this psalm, even those who have learned few other Scripture portions. Ministers have used it to comfort people who are

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going through severe personal trials, suffering illness, or dying. For some, the words of this psalm have been the last they have ever uttered in life." (Boice)

When David writes this Psalm though, he is very old, in fact he is almost at the point of death. He is looking back over his life and he is at peace. He is reflecting on the goodness of God and the various ways in which the Lord has watched over his life.

David is please and very secure in his trust in God and writes very profoundly about how God has kept him throughout his lifetime.

In the very first verse of the Psalm David makes a very, bold and profound declaration, "The Lord is my shepherd"

The title or notion of Shepherd in the Israelite context was a very powerful one. It had a very rich and important significance to them and was not used willy nilly or in any insignificant ways. When the title of Shepherd was used, it was used to talk about a King, a Lord, or God himself.

He primary duties of the shepherd's vocation was protection and provision for the flock. The shepherd pastured the flock, led them in the right way when they had to move, fended off predators.

The sheep were the shepherd's responsibility, and he was accountable for their welfare and safety.

David in looking back at his life highlights some critical ways that God, his Shepherd has watched over his life unto the very time that he writes. This Psalm is also a testimony to us saying, "Look what the Lord has done.

It is a testimony of God's SALVIFIC Presence with his people at every phase of their lives.

It is a testimony of Gods power coming alive in the lives of his children when they really needed it and even when they least expected it.

This is David's testimony of God's infinite GOODNESS, GOD'S UNCEASING GRACE AND GOD'S FAITHFULNESS.

David say, because God has been my shepherd.

- a. I do not lack. David realised that he had no need as God cared for him throughout his time serving the Lord. During the forty years in the wilderness, Israel lacked nothing (Deuteronomy 2:7) **For the Lord your God**

has blessed you in everything you have done. He has watched your every step through this great wilderness. During these forty years, the Lord your God has been with you, and you have lacked nothing."

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

- ***Succulent ideal pastures filled with good things.***
He leads me beside peaceful waters.
 - ***The best water holes where we are refreshed and rejuvenated.***
 - ***The Lord takes us to the best places in life.***
 - ***Our God is a God of completion, he never leaves things undone.***
- b.** He restores my soul/life. There are times when circumstances cause us as to give up on life. Many times, we are battered and beaten by the tides of life but somehow we continue to survive. God restores our souls and gives us reasons to go on.
- c.** He leads me in the paths of righteousness: David no doubt was reflecting on the many times he could have chosen the evil path. He could have gone against God and fought Saul like an evil man. No he committed his battles to the Lord. The Lord's way leads to righteousness. There are some fights we are going to lose if we lose our righteous selves.
- d.** You are with me, your rod and staff they comfort me. This is the word of salvation addressed to those in danger. The Israelites knew this calm reassurance from God very well as God would have said to them many times, "fear not, for I am with you."
- e.** You prepare a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. This is an image dependent on the feast that was part of the rituals of thanksgiving.
- f.** Goodness (the benefits of blessing) and lovingkindness shall pursue me. It is of significance that DAVID who was pursued by enemies was here noting that he was pursued by God's Goodness and mercy.
- g.** ***And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever: The Psalm ends with the calmest assurance that he would enjoy the presence of the LORD forever - both in his days on this earth and beyond.***

"In the Old Testament world, to eat and drink at someone's table created a bond of mutual loyalty, and could be the culminated token of a covenant...So to be God's guest is to be more than a acquaintance, invited for a day. It is to live with Him." (Kidner)

ii. "While I am here I will be a child at home with my God; the whole world shall be his house to me; and when I ascend into the upper chamber I shall not

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change my company, nor even change the house; I shall only go to dwell in the upper storey of the house of the Lord for ever." (Spurgeon)

Song of Response: "He Leadeth Me" BoP #

WE BRING OUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS

The Prayers of God's People, concluded with "**The Lord's My Shepherd**" BoP#11

Work and Witness of our Church

A Time of Giving

Sung Response: "**Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow**" BoP#79

WE GO OUT UNITED IN FAITH AND PURPOSE

The Benediction

Recessional Hymn: "**May the God of Hope**" BoP#726, with additional stanza:

2. God will be our shepherd as we go our way
 and will not forsake us when we go astray.
 Even though the load of life is hard to bear,
 we must not forget that God is always there. *Refrain*