



# grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

## April 19-25, 2021 YOUTH SUNDAY

Notes from sermon on 4/18:

To pray for this week:

### Family Focus Question

Describe the qualities of a good shepherd.

### Questions for Small Groups

1. We serve a Good Shepherd but we are the sheep. What does it mean to say that sometimes “sheep smell like sheep?”
2. How do we listen for the Shepherd’s voice?
3. Who are the other sheep who are not in the sheep pen? (John 10:16)
4. Who are the wolves?
5. Who are the “hired hands”?

### Monday, April 19: Read John 10:11-18

*“How do you know who to follow?”* Our youth leaders will pose this question this Sunday, first at the children’s message and then to the rest of us. For the past year, so many of us have asked ourselves this question. What science report should I trust? Which news channel? Which politician? There are so many voices demanding the most coveted resource in the world today: our attention. Who will get it?

This week we will explore scripture passages that use one of the most common descriptions of God and Jesus in the Bible: that of a shepherd. Perhaps more than ever in our generation, we finally understand that we truly *are* sheep, at the mercy of forces of nature and “wolves” that come in many forms. We desperately need to be able to hear God’s voice in its many forms, and especially want our youth to learn to discern between the voice of God and the voice of a “wolf.” In today’s gospel reading from John, Jesus describes himself as the “good shepherd” who willingly lays down his life for his flock and gathers all sheep together, rather than scattering them.

Let us all pray this week for greater discernment in ourselves and in our youth in listening for Christ’s voice through words that gather together, not tear apart, from sources who are self-sacrificing, not self-serving.

**Tuesday, April 20: Read Psalm 23**

As familiar as today's psalm is, it takes on new meaning this year as our entire world has faced dark shadows, valleys, and death. Our youth have been uniquely affected, missing out on so many of the benchmarks and rites of passage we adults enjoyed throughout our own high school experience. Many of our senior high school youth are accepting offers from colleges they have not been able to visit. At an early age, they have now been taught that everything can change in a moment and nothing is guaranteed. Yet on Sunday, we will see a youth group that is resilient, creatively adaptive, and supported through a community based on the love of Christ. We will hear messages of hope, and see the light at the end of our dark valley.

**Wednesday, April 21: Read Isaiah 40:9-11**

Today's words were written in the midst of the Babylonian Exile when the Jewish people were driven from Jerusalem and either killed, scattered, or sequestered in Babylon. When they were finally able to return to their beloved capital and even more importantly, to their temple, they felt lost, disoriented, and...changed. The voices of the prophets offered unity, clarity, and hope.

We at Reveille have been in a form of exile and diaspora for the past year, and as we see the light beginning to dawn, we may feel a bit disoriented and changed. Let us all be instruments for God our Shepherd in gathering the flock back together, carrying our youth, children, and adults "close to [our] heart." Let us "tend", "gather", "carry" and be "gentle" with the flock, yet not be afraid to "lift up [our] voice with a shout."

**Thursday, April 22: Read Matthew 18:10-14**

As we continue to explore how our God and Savior is a "good shepherd," we read today of the amazing fact that each and every one of us is treasured and actively sought by God. The parable of the wandering sheep can teach us two things today. First, we are never too lost or off-track for God to find us and welcome us back. Second, as agents of Christ and members of Christ's body, we, too, need to actively seek those "sheep" who have wandered off and find ways to welcome them back. As we begin to meet in person again, let us look for the faces that are missing and reach out to them.

**Friday, April 23: Read 1 Peter 5:1-4**

Today's passage calls all of us to be shepherds in Christ's name. We are called to be humble, self-sacrificing, and good examples. Are we ready to take on this challenge? In many ways, our youth are leading the way in this, being among the most active members of our congregation right now. Throughout the pandemic, they have been meeting virtually and, more recently, in person to lead in worship and even prepare a socially-distanced version of Godspell that will soon be released on YouTube for the entire world to see. Our youth are supporting and carrying us, even as they need to be supported and carried. Let us all give them our support this week and listen to the voice of Christ our Good Shepherd speaking through them this Sunday.

**Saturday, April 24: Scripture Memorization: John 10:14**

"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me." (NIV)

**Sunday, April 25: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Words of**

**Assurance:** *The words are sure and true: the Lord is our Shepherd and provides for us everything we need. Know that God is with you now, forgiving you, rejoicing to be in your presence and willing to transform you by the power of the Holy Spirit into true and full disciples of the Son, Jesus, the Crucified and Resurrected One. Amen.*