

Grades 1-2

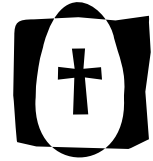
The Good Shepherd

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
John 10:11-18

Lectionary Sunday/
Church Season
Easter 4

Lesson Focus
**Jesus cares for us like a
good shepherd**



gather (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<p>Arrival Time Kids make a shepherd's staff together, and do an activity sheet.</p>	<p>Activity Page </p>	<p>Brown craft paper or newspaper, masking tape, pencils or markers</p>
<p>Circle Time Kids will introduce themselves in a "sheep-like" way, review the lectionary season, and talk about a shepherd's staff.</p>	<p>Leaflets</p>	<p>Shepherd's staff created during Arrival Time</p>
<p>Prayer Time Kids pray quietly, then louder.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>

open the bible (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<p>The Good Shepherd Storytelling Leader/kids reads aloud from the Spark Story Bible and kids think of places that Jesus watches over them.</p>	<p>Spark Story Bibles</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Signing Sheep Kids learn simplified sign language motions to "tell" the story.</p>	<p>Leaflet, lesson stickers</p>	<p>Pencils</p>
<p>Who Am I? Kids write about things they like and share their favorites.</p>	<p>Leaflets</p>	<p>Pencils</p>

activate faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
“Christ Is Risen” Words Kids create words using the letters in the phrase “Christ Is Risen.”	Leaflets	Pencils
Do You Know About Sheep? Kids learn real information about sheep.	Leaflets	Pencils
Don’t Look Who’s Talking Kids play a voice recognition game.	None	Bandana (optional)

send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Closing Time Kids select what they will do at home this week and affirm that Jesus cares for each of them.	Leaflets, Family Pages 	Pencils, scissors, mirror (pocket-sized or handheld)
Closing Prayer Kids pray in two groups.	None	None

gather (10 minutes)

arrival time

Make shepherd's staff as a class: Twist a long piece of craft paper or newspaper into a long stick shape; bend the top quarter of the stick into a curve. Wrap masking tape around the whole thing to help keep the paper twisted.

When all of the kids have arrived, invite them to join you in a circle.

Spark Resources:

[Activity Page](#)



Supplies

Brown craft paper or newspaper
Masking tape
Pencils or markers

circle time

Greet each kid by name as if you were sheep and invite them to greet each other. Use each other's real names, but add as many baa baas as you like. You should go first, saying: **Baa, baa, baa, my name is _____, what's yours?** Kid answers. **Nice to baa baa meet you, _____, baa baa.** Whoever has just been "met" introduces themselves sheep-style to another person.

Who can tell me what season we are in here at church? (*Easter, but some kids may guess winter or spring.*) **How did you know that?** (*Parents or pastor or Sunday school teacher told me; Alleluias back in church service; Lilies decorating the church.*) Point to the front of the leaflet and note the church season, lectionary date, and color. **Easter is an exciting time in the church year, when we remember Jesus being raised from the dead. We have a big celebration on Easter Sunday, but in the church, we keep celebrating Jesus' resurrection for six more Sundays after Easter too!**

Ask the kids:

Who takes care of sheep? (*A shepherd.*)

We greeted each other in a sheep-like way today because today's story is about a sheep and a shepherd. It's a story Jesus told to the people. He told them that they were like the sheep and that he was the Good Shepherd. A shepherd uses a special tool to take care of sheep; it's called a staff. Show the kids the staff you created together. **The curve in the stick helps the shepherd guide the sheep. Where else have you seen a shape like this?** (*Christmas time—pictures of shepherds, candy canes.*) **When we see a shepherd's staff, it can remind us of our special relationship with Jesus. Jesus cares for us like a good shepherd.**

Spark Resources

[Leaflets](#)

Supplies

Shepherd's staff created during Arrival Time

prayer time

Speak this prayer together (whispering at first, and then louder as you repeat it):

**Jesus cares for us like a good shepherd.
Thanks to the Good Shepherd!**

Spark Resources
None

Supplies
None

the good shepherd storytelling

Have you ever seen a real shepherd? Have you seen one in a cartoon or movie or on TV? Did they carry a staff? In the Bible, Jesus talks about himself as the good shepherd.

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles

Let's read the story in our Spark Story Bible. It's from the book of John.

Supplies
None

Pass out the Spark Story Bible and invite everyone to find The Good Shepherd story. Encourage kids to read along, especially watching for the word "shepherd."

Have a brief conversation about the story. Ask the kids these questions:

- 1. What are some things a good shepherd does for the sheep?** (*Cares, knows, loves, protects, never forgets, finds, doesn't hide from danger.*)
- 2. Who are the sheep, according to Jesus?** (*We are!*)
- 3. How do you know that Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is watching over you?**

Shepherds watch their sheep, even when the sheep don't know it. Jesus is always watching over us—no matter where we are or what we are doing. Let's play a game to remind us that Jesus is always with us. Think about some place that Jesus watches over you—don't say it out loud! Whisper suggestions to kids who don't have ideas—school, soccer game, dinner table, in the car, etc.

Ask for a volunteer. (Child's name) _____, **can you act out clues for us to guess the place you are thinking of without using words?** (Have one act and other kids guess.) **Yes, Jesus is with us when we are at _____!** Ask for other volunteers and repeat the "Yes!" phrase after each one.

signing sheep

Give each kid a leaflet, pencil and stickers.

Jesus says that he cares for us like a good shepherd. The flock of sheep on this page needs someone to care for them. Who's missing? (*Shepherd.*) Use your sticker to give the sheep what they need.

Spark Resources
Leaflet
Lesson stickers

We can tell others about Jesus too. First let's use our voices and spoken words. Echo me, "Jesus cares for us like a good shepherd." Kids echo phrase. We can tell others about Jesus with our hands too. We can learn some sign language motions to tell others about Jesus without our voices.

Supplies
Pencils

Let's start with the word *Jesus*. Echo me with your hands. Demonstrate motion:

touch middle finger of right hand to left palm, then middle finger of left hand to right palm (think of the nails in Jesus' hands on the cross). Say **Jesus** while signing the word.

The motions for the word care look like eyes watching out! Demonstrate motion: hold up two fingers in each hand, then lay right hand, pinkie side down, on top of left hand thumb side, and then circle both hands around. Say **care** while signing the word.

Let's put them both together and say, "Jesus cares for us." Show kids, let them copy you.

To sign the word good, touch your chin with the fingers of one hand, holding the other hand palm side up in front of your chest. Then drop the "chin hand" into your waiting palm, "Good!" Think about tasting food that is good, but don't put your fingers in your mouth!

Shepherd is the trickiest word to sign because we need to put three separate words together. We'll start with the sign for "sheep." Pretend one hand is a pair of scissors, use your pointer and middle fingers for the blades. Hold your other arm out, palm side up. Pretend it is the sheep whose wool you are going to shear. Move your "scissors" hand above your arm like you are cutting the wool off the sheep. The next motion is the same as signing the word care because shepherds care for their sheep! Sign the word care. Last, we add the sign for person because a shepherd is a person who takes care of sheep. Demonstrate the word person: Face palms toward each other, waist height and lower hands together as if sliding down someone's torso. Show the kids, and let them copy. Sign "sheep" and "care" and "person" as you say, **Shep-herd. You've got it!**

Let's put the whole phrase together! Say the phrase signing the underlined words: **"Jesus cares for us like a good shepherd."**

Now you can tell people about Jesus, the Good Shepherd, with your voice AND your hands!

Look at your leaflet and let's read about where we can find the story of the Good Shepherd in the Bible.

Today's Bible story, The Good Shepherd, is from the book of John. John is one of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Gospel means good news!

Are the Gospels in the Old Testament? (No.) Are they in the New Testament? (Yes.) The New Testament starts with the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Now let's use our stickers to fill in the blanks on page 3 of the leaflet so you can tell others about the gospels. After attaching the stickers, read the statements together.

If you are interested in teaching your kids a Bible Memory Verse (BMV) from this story, use this one. Teach it to them by inviting them to echo what you say, one phrase at a time.

I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me. John 10:14

who am i?

Jesus knows a lot about who you are. In fact, Jesus knows all the things you like before you even say them out loud (or think them). Write down some of your favorites. Then we can share your MOST favorite thing. Give the kids time to record as you share, **"My MOST favorite thing is _____.** **Jesus knows it, now you do too!"** Ask kids to share their MOST favorite thing and to repeat, "Jesus knows it, now you do too!"

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
Pencils

activate faith (15 minutes)

"christ is risen" words

We're still in the Easter season! What happened at the first Easter? (*Christ was raised from the dead, Jesus was alive again, the resurrection.*) **Find the words "Christ is Risen" on your Try-It page. Many other words can be made out of the same letters; for example, "nice." How many more words can we make? Find a partner and write as many as you can until I say, "Christ is Risen." Then we'll share them together.** Give kids a few minutes to write and share.

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
Pencils

If kids have trouble, suggest that they try words that start with S first. Don't worry about misspelled words. (At this age, getting the sound of the word is more important than getting the spelling of the word.)

do you know about sheep?

How much do you really know about sheep? Let's learn what's real together. Ask for a volunteer to read #1, "Sheep have four parts to their stomach." **How many of you think that sentence is true? How many think it is false? How many parts do our stomachs have?** (*One main stomach.*) For #2, if kids aren't sure whether sheep are amphibians, see if they can tell you what else they might be (*reptiles, mammals, birds, fish, and so forth*).

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
Pencils

Have the kids continue, guessing whether each answer is true or false. Afterwards, talk them through the correct answers.

1. T (They're called ruminants.)
2. F (They're actually mammals.)
3. F (They won't drink it even if it just has algae in it.)
4. T (That's something else unique about ruminants.)
5. T (Human and sheep faces—they can even tell emotions through facial expressions, isn't that weird?)
6. T (It may be itchy, but it's warm.)
7. F (Ewes are female sheep; lambs are baby sheep.)

don't look who's talking

Jesus knows everything about us, even our voices. Can we recognize each other's voices? Ask for one volunteer, who will close their eyes (or be blindfolded). Explain that you will point to someone, who will say, **"Jesus cares for us like a good shepherd."** The blindfolded person then guesses who was speaking. Kids can disguise their voices. Give each volunteer a few turns before asking for a new volunteer.

Spark Resources
None

Supplies
Bandana (optional)

send (5 minutes)

closing time

We heard today that Jesus is like a good shepherd to us, because he watches over us and protects us like a good shepherd would. Jesus doesn't just want us to trust him, he also wants us to watch out for other sheep. We can share our love and share what we have learned today with other sheep. Who do you want to share with? Direct attention to the Faith on the Go!, and have the kids fill in the blanks. Encourage them to mark one or more of the ideas or add their own. Cut the slip off on the line, ready to give to someone else. **Next week we can tell each other how we shared our love with other sheep.**

Spark Resources
Leaflets
Family Pages



Supplies
Pencils
Scissors
Mirror (pocket-sized or handheld)

prayer time

Split the class into two groups. Group 1 says, **"Jesus cares for us like a good shepherd,"** then Group 2 says, **"Thanks to the Good Shepherd!"** Repeat, starting quietly and gradually increasing your volume, then gradually decrease the volume until you are all praying silently.

Spark Resources
None

Supplies
None

Be sure to send leaflets home with kids, and give each of them a Family Page to take home.