

23RD PSALM ROTATION — OVERVIEW

TOPIC/STORY:

Familiar, classic psalm of “trust in the divine shepherd,” who leads his people through danger to security. (from footnote in the New Oxford Annotated Bible.)

DATES:

Apr. 18. 25, May 2 (Glen anniv. service), May 9, May 16, 2004

WORKSHOPS/ACTIVITY CENTRES:

Arts, Music, Garden, Computer & Video labs

ACTIVITIES:

Bedroom door banners, learn and perform songs, clear litter/prep beds/plant bulbs around church and neighborhood + garden designs, input text for iron-on transfers for door banner + computer games, watch movie segment and discuss.

SOURCE TEXT:

Psalm 23.

READ THIS.

KEY VERSE:

Whole thing.

AFTER STORYTIME IN CHURCH, ALL AGE GROUPS WILL START TOGETHER FOR GATHERING TIME, WITH PRAYER, COLLECTION AND INTRODUCTION OF STUDY MATERIAL, IN CELEBRATION HALL. THEN LEADERS WILL LEAVE WITH SCHEDULED GROUP FOR THEIR WORKSHOPS.

23RD PSALM ROTATION

BACKGROUND NOTES (& OTHER NEAT INFO):

Narrative voice. This psalm is generally thought to take the persona or narrative voice of David who was, of course, a shepherd. It takes the point of view, however, of the sheep.

More about David. The story of David the young shepherd begins in around 1 Samuel 16.

Our own Good Shepherd window. Did you know we have St. John's has own image of the Good Shepherd? It's the small stained glass window in the lightbox outside Rev. Jim's office in Georgetown. Click this link for a preview: _____ . But make sure you take a look at the real thing!

Where are the womenfolk? Ask Jim about the young girls he saw working as shepherdesses when he visited India.

Shepherd & sheep trivia. (Trivia section taken mainly from Kirk of Kildare lesson set at www.rotaton.org)

Shepherds

- Were not wealthy
- Worked long hard hours
- Lived in the fields with the sheep; spent all their time outdoors, rain or shine
- Were sometimes old, sometimes young
- Protected their sheep from wild animals
- Made sure their sheep had enough food and water.
- Used oil on the sheep's wounds to keep them from getting infected.
- Used a rod to protect the sheep and to discipline the sheep (prod and nudge to get them going the right way!)
- Used the staff to lift, pull, grab hold of the sheep.

Sheep

- Will aimlessly wander anywhere - don't really watch where they are going
- Need to be led to food and water
- Will drink anything - even bad/brackish water or other toxic liquids if thirsty
- Are very vulnerable to attack from wild animals - don't have means to defend themselves
- Sheep need to have cuts, injuries taken care of as infection seems to set in and easily kill the sheep. Sheep are not as hardy as other farm animals.
- References that you might find useful in gathering additional information for your storytelling experience:

• A Shepherd Looks at the Psalm 23, W. Phillip Keller, Zondervan Gifts ISBN 0310977762.

• Harper's Encyclopedia of Bible Life, 3d rev. ed. (New York: Harper and Row 1978)

Neat detail. There's a rather nifty learning tool that seems to be for children via the following link: <http://www.christchurchwinnnetka.org/ShepherdVerse1.htm> . It breaks this psalm into six sections, each with a nice graphic element. Worth a look.

Just for fun check out the phrasing in different Bible versions see which one appeals to you more. For example, here's sampling of first three or so verses.

New King James Version:

The Lord is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside the still waters.

He restores my soul.

The Young Women of Faith Bible (New International Version):

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,

he leads me beside quiet waters,

he restores my soul.

The New Jerusalem Bible:

Yahweh is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

In grassy meadows he lets me lie.

By tranquil streams he leads me

to restore my spirit.

Good News Bible:

The Lord is my shepherd:

I have everything I need.

He lets me rest in fields of green grass

and leads me to quiet pools of fresh water.

He gives me new strength.

The King James Version:

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:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN & YOUTH

1. What are some things God gives us to refresh us?
2. A good shepherd leads the sheep along the path to green pastures and still waters. The sheep don't always follow. Name some examples of not so great paths.

3. To say this psalm emphasizes the idea that God never lets anything undesirable happen to us would be to think like a sheep. Suggest another meaning for this psalm. (Something like, give it up, admit you're lost and know you'll be welcome back at home. Hmm, where have I heard that lately...?!)

23RD PSALM — COMPUTER LAB

ACTIVITY: Children will type in full or partial text of Psalm 23 for output as iron-on transfers. (Text applied later and banners returned to children the following week for arts lab.) To help children remember the lines of this text. Also computer games to reinforce key images.

PREPARATION

* Be aware of the age group of children you will be working with in the week ahead.

MATERIALS, ETC:

- simple word pro program

(for leader at home)

- iron-on transfer pages
- iron + ironing board
- precut lengths of cotton bedsheet stype cloth for banners

REAL TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Ready. Quickly review or recap the story with them before starting activity. Each week, see how much more detail each group of kids can supply on the story they've been studying.

Set. Link or explain your activity to the current story.

Go. Boot up.

23RD PSALM ROTATION — ARTS LAB

ACTIVITY: Cloth banners. To create a fun, familiar, personalized home-based memory aid for the children.

PREPARATION

- * Be aware of the age group of children you will be working with in the week ahead.
- ** Be prepared to increase amount of pre-prep time for classes of younger children.

MATERIALS:

- banners with text from computer workshop
- fabric markers
- cloth and felt pieces to glue around wide border of banner front (these can be precut in sheep and grass and trees and flower shapes for younger kids).
- precut lengths of wooden dowel
- lengths of yarn

INSTRUCTIONS

- turn down top edge of banner about 1 1/2 in. for a (generous) casing. Run line of glue along outside edge of fold. Slide wooden dowel thru cloth tube. Flip over and allow to dry while kids decorate fronts.
- have children cut out and/or glue on their cloth banner surface decorations. Can also use fabric markers.
- knot yarn around each end of dowel.

REAL TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Ready. Quickly review or recap the story with them before starting activity. Each week, see how much more detail each group of kids can supply on the story they've been studying.

Set. Link or explain your activity to the current story.

Go. Start your activity.

** Be prepared at breaks in the activity, such a glue drying time, with a story or a discussion point, depending on the age group you are working with.

23RD PSALM — MUSIC LAB

ACTIVITY: Teach the children song(s) to help remember the words.

PREPARATION

* Be aware of the age group of children you will be working with in the week ahead.

MATERIALS:

** Kim (Vanderglas) has already picked out a song for this workshop.

• Younger kids will follow along with rhythm instruments.

• And Kim has a wonderful plan for bringing in some mini-glockenspiels and having older kids pick out the tune as well.

REAL TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Ready. Quickly review or recap the story with them before starting activity. Each week, see how much more detail each group of kids can supply on the story they've been studying.

Set. Link or explain your activity to the current story.

Go. Start your playing!

23RD PSALM ROTATION — GARDEN WORKSHOP

ACTIVITY: Be 'good shepherds' by helping look after the St. John's grounds, and possibly neighbouring park. Draft ideas for design for outdoor garden area with benches around the apple tree by the back lot.

PREPARATION

* Be aware of the age group of children you will be working with in the week ahead.

- plastic groc and garbage bags
- gardening gloves
- hand tools
- few bags of soil
- bulbs
- graph paper
- pens, markers, crayons

Do bit of cleanup or planting. Then have kids draft their design for garden described above. Submit ideas (best 3 or so) to property committee, among others.

REAL TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Ready. Quickly review or recap the story with them before starting activity. Each week, see how much more detail each group of kids can supply on the story they've been studying.

Set. Link or explain your activity to the current story.

Go. Start digging and designing!

23RD PSALM — VIDEO LAB*

ACTIVITY: Watch portion of video that gives one idea of what being a 'good shepherd' is. Also has pictures of the 'real' animals.

PREPARATION

* Be aware of the age group of children you will be working with in the week ahead.

MATERIALS:

• Get movie. Am kind of drawn to that section of the 'Babe' the pig movie where Babe gets his sheep to win the competition by speaking nicely to them.

REAL TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Ready. Quickly review or recap the story with them before starting activity. Each week, see how much more detail each group of kids can supply on the story they've been studying.

Set. Link or explain your activity to the current story.

Go. Cue VCR and push play!

* This activity is suggested specifically for the Glen Williams anniversary Sunday, which occurs in the middle of this rotation. An activity like this connects with material kids in town and the Glen have already been studying. It can expand to fit (almost!) any number of guest kids. Leadership team could run this so that Cathy can enjoy the anniv. service. Also this way, we don't have to send out a message of 'No Sunday school' for this special Sunday.