

Together @ Home

Lectionary Edition
Sunday 3rd April
Fourth Sunday of Easter



Here are some activities you could do together as a family, begin with the story and then do as many or as few as you like, in any order.

Bible Passage

Today we will be exploring together, the story of the Good Shepherd.

You can find it in your Bible in:

John 10 v 1–10

Read the story together – choose a Bible translation or children’s story version which best suits your group.

The other passages we will be thinking about at church this week are:

Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:19-25

A prayer to say together

Dear God,

Thank you for the story of the Good Shepherd, that reminds us of how much you love us. Thank you that you feed and protect us and that your son Jesus came to die for us.

Thank you that we are not alone but are part of a flock, we pray today for all those in our church family, that you would protect them and provide for them.

We pray for all those who don’t know you yet, that they would hear your voice and come to know you as their shepherd.

Amen

Discussion

A question for adults to ask children

What are some of the things a shepherd does for their sheep?

A shepherd takes care of their sheep, they provide the food and shelter they need, taking them to fields where they can roam safely and eat fresh grass. In Bible times the sheep would have needed to be protected at all times, even at night – just like the shepherds who were visited when Jesus was born – there were wild animals who might attack the sheep or thieves who might try to take them away.

Jesus used the image of a shepherd and his sheep as a picture to help us understand God’s love for us. Jesus cares for us, protects us and was willing to die for us.

A question for children to ask adults

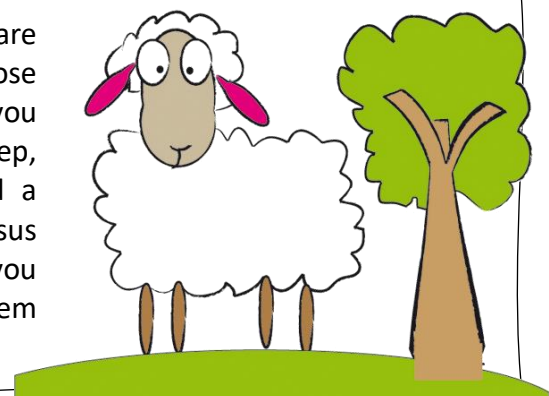
Can you tell a story about a time when God looked after and protected you?

Family Activity 1

You will need: A toy sheep or sheep picture (you can always draw your own!)

Take it in turns to hide the sheep around the house or in a room, everybody must search for the sheep. The person who has hidden the sheep could give clues such as ‘warmer’ when somebody is getting nearer to the sheep and ‘colder’ if they are moving further away.

In the Bible sheep are used as a picture of those who know Jesus – if you know any lost sheep, people who have had a relationship with Jesus but have strayed, you could pray for them together.





A verse to remember

Psalm 23 v 1

"The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need."

Try to learn this verse together, you could come up with some actions to help you remember it or decorate the verse on a piece of paper or card together and put it up somewhere to remind you of it through the week.

Family Activity 2

Jesus said that the sheep recognise the voice of the shepherd and run away from the voices of strangers, why not test how good you are at recognising voices. Take it in turns to close your eyes, somebody else should put on a silly voice – see if you can still recognise who is speaking.



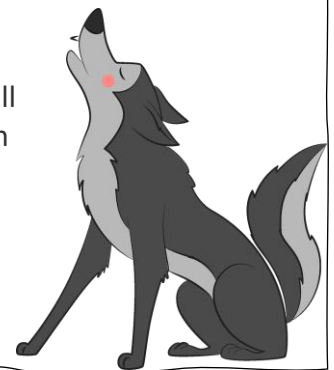
If you are a small family, why not ask friends or relatives to send you a recording of their voice or a voice note for your family to listen to and guess from.

Family Activity 3

Play a game of "What's the time Mr. Wolf?". One person is 'Mr Wolf' and stands at one end of the room, everybody else stands at the other, they are the sheep.

The sheep ask "What's the time Mr. Wolf?" and Mr. Wolf must say a time e.g. - "one o'clock" "eight o'clock" etc. The sheep then take that number of steps toward Mr. Wolf – (e.g. eight steps for eight o'clock)

This is repeated. Each time the steps will take the sheep closer to Mr Wolf. When Mr. Wolf feels like it, instead of a number they say, "Dinner time!" they then turn around and chase the sheep. The first sheep to be caught becomes the next Mr. Wolf.



Listening to his voice

Jesus said that the sheep know and recognise the voice of the shepherd. Spend some time together as a family waiting and listening to God.

Write down any thoughts, feelings, or pictures you have in your mind and heart while you are listening.

There are lots of different ways that God can speak to us, the more we practice listening the better we can recognise the voice of the shepherd.

Helping Older Children

In these difficult times Older Children might be asking questions about what happens to people who die. They might also be asking about what happens to those who do not know Jesus.

Verse 7 reminds us that Jesus is 'the gate' – Jesus promised that anybody can receive his gift of salvation. When he died on the cross, he did it for everybody. There is a way for everybody to become a friend of God and receive his promise of eternal life in heaven with Him.

Verse 16 talks about other sheep joining the flock. The people that Jesus was speaking to were Jewish, but Jesus knew that his death on the cross would open a way for everybody to come to know him. We might not know if a friend or family member has accepted Jesus as their Saviour, but we can pray and trust God that his plan is for everybody. It is never too late for somebody to open their heart to God.

A colouring page you could print and colour together

Thank you to www.marydeandraws.com for giving us permission to use their beautiful colouring sheet.
You can find more colouring pages and artwork on their website.



Puzzle Sheet



How many sheep can you count on this page?

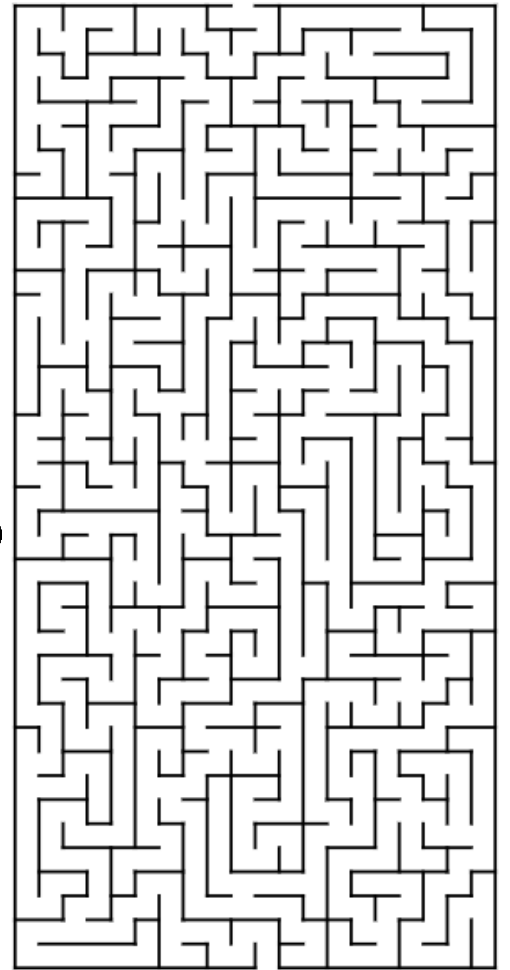
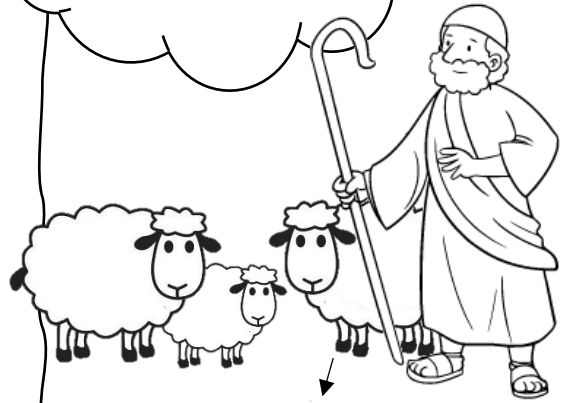
Don't fall asleep while you count them!



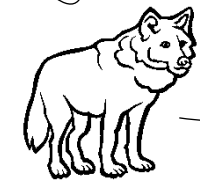
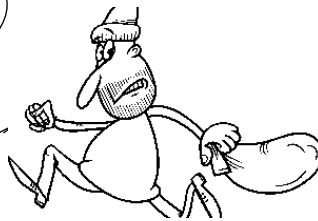
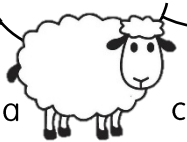
Draw a big tangly scribble to give the sheep a body, then finish the picture by adding a lovely green field full of delicious grass for the sheep to eat!



Can you help the shepherd find their way through the maze to the lost sheep?



Which path should the sheep follow to get back to their shepherd?



There are 11 sheep on the page including the one you helped draw. The sheep should follow path c.