

## **"The Lord is My Shepherd"**

**I hope you are safe and healthy.** I pray for you and ask God to keep you well and to give you strength during this difficult time. **I hope you enjoy the worship and devotional videos I have posted on our church Facebook page, as well as the videos posted by our music staff, our new Youth & Family ministry coordinator, and many others. It is easy to see them:** (1) go to the church website: [firstenglishlutheranchurch.360unite.com](http://firstenglishlutheranchurch.360unite.com) (2) on the opening screen click on the words, "click here to visit us on Facebook" (you do not have to join Facebook) (3) scroll down to view the videos---turn the speaker on (volume) on your computer. **I hope you are taking time for prayer each day, and also staying connected with others in your family, and in our church family, through phone calls, e-mails, texts, and social media. I am working from home: please contact me any time.**

**This coming Sunday, the Fourth Sunday of Easter, is often called "Good Shepherd Sunday."** Every year, the psalm of the day is Psalm 23, and the Gospel reading is from John 10, where Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd." **What a great comfort to know that our risen Lord Jesus Christ cares for us as a faithful shepherd cares for his sheep! We need these words of assurance in this time of uncertainty and anxiety during the COVID19 pandemic.**

### **What are the qualities of a good shepherd?**

**(1) First, a good shepherd loves his sheep.** I know farmers who love their animals--sheep, pigs, cattle, horses. They love farming, they love the land, and they love their animals. Think of a 4H student and how much he or she loves their lamb or their calf, caring for it, carrying it in their arms. Or think of how much a child (or an adult) loves their dog. That's the way the Lord loves each one of us.

**(2) Second, a good shepherd cares for the sheep, especially the sick ones.** Think of a farmer or a veterinarian who gives vaccinations to their animals, and cares for them when they are sick. Think of the farmer who helps a ewe give birth to a lamb. Remember taking care of your own children when they were sick, getting up with them in the middle of the night, comforting them, taking their temperature, giving them medicine. Think of the nurses who have been caring for those seriously ill from COVID19. Jesus always showed great compassion for the sick and people with disabilities. The Lord always loves his beloved children, but cares for them even more when they are sick or suffering.

**(3) Third, a good shepherd searches out the lost.** Think of the farmer who goes searching for their animals that have broken out of their fenced-in pastures. I have heard many stories about my father-in-law going in search of his cattle that had gotten out, and finding them and bringing them home. Remember if your child had been gone too long, and going to search for them and find them. So the Lord searches for us when we wander away from Him, and He comes to find us, and gently bring us home.

**(4) Fourth, a good shepherd provides food and water for their sheep.** Think of the farmer who makes sure his animals have fresh water every day, and gives them their hay or their feed every day, or leads them to good pastures to eat and be nourished. In a similar way, our Lord Jesus feeds us and quenches our thirst. Yes, God provides us with food and drink to nourish and strengthen our bodies. But even more important, **The Lord feeds and nourishes our souls,**

**with His Word, the Good News of God's forgiveness and new life. And the God quenches our spiritual thirst with His Holy Spirit,** the Spirit of our risen Lord Jesus, who renews our faith and sustains our hope.

These are four qualities of a good shepherd. Our living Lord Jesus Christ is our Good Shepherd, who loves us; who cares for His children, especially the sick; who searches for the lost; and who provides nourishment for His beloved people.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Steve

P.S.--Please continue to support First English with your offerings. You can mail them to the church, or you can click on the link on our website to give online. Thank you for your faithfulness and generosity!