

JULY 21, 2024  
NINTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST



*God cares for us like a shepherd.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 6:30-34, 53-56	Jesus teaches and heals
Monday	Jeremiah 23:1-6	God promises a righteous king
Tuesday	Ephesians 2:11-22	United by Christ
Wednesday	1 Peter 2:18-25	The example of Christ's suffering
Thursday	Matthew 9:35-38	Jesus talks about his suffering
Friday	Micah 2:12-13	A promise of hope
Saturday	Psalms 23	The Lord is my shepherd
Sunday	John 6:1-21	Jesus feeds the five thousand

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*As he [Jesus] went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. Mark 6:34 (NRSV)*

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Shepherding God, we thank you for supplying our wants with your healing touch that feeds us with your love through Christ Jesus our Shepherd and Lord. Amen.

#### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, you care for us like a shepherd cares for the sheep; we thank you for this food, a gift of your loving care for us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **A Blessing to Give:**

May God care for you and calm your fears through Christ our Lord.



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### HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Have No Fear, Little Flock*



### WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When you hear the word shepherd, what images come to mind?
- How does God act like a shepherd to calm your anxieties and give you hope?

### DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Jeremiah 23:1-6.

The shepherds spoken of in this reading are the kings of Judah and Israel. These kings are recognized as shepherds, those who care for the people. Due to the injustices and unfaithfulness of most of the kings, the people have suffered. There is clearly prophetic judgment in this writing. The point of prophetic judgment is not scolding but hope. Through the prophet Jeremiah God gives hope to the people with the promise of a just and faithful shepherd king. The people will live without fear; they will not be appalled by events around them; they will not be abandoned or disappear from the face of the earth. Jesus, in the reading from Mark 6, is the one who comes as the Son of God, the true shepherd king. The people are in great need, fearful, and distressed. In Mark 6, Jesus comes with compassion to feed the five thousand, heal, and calm their anxieties and sicknesses.

*Discuss:* What needs to be shepherded with the goodness of God in our lives and in the world today?

*Pray:* **Dear God, you shepherd us with your love that we may not live in fear or in want. We thank you for your compassion that touches our lives through Jesus Christ our shepherd. Amen.**

### SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you help someone cope with their fears and anxieties?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Psalms 23 is one of the most familiar psalms in the Bible. Many people know this psalm by heart. A pattern of divine reading called *lectio divina* is a way to meditate and pray. Read Psalm 23 once, then pause. Read it again and then pick out a word or phrase that has meaning for you. Read it again and wonder how it speaks to you today. Consider highlighting or underlining the words or phrases you have chosen in your Bible. Pause and reflect on those words.

*Pray:* **God of compassion and protection, give us peace and faith in knowing that you, our shepherd, pursue us with your goodness through Jesus Christ. Amen.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)