

TheChildrensSermon.com

Fourth Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 3, 2009
Gospel: John 10: 1-10

The Jobs of a Shepherd

OPTIONAL PROP(S): Stuffed sheep and/or shepherds crook

This week's Bible readings have a special theme. They talk about what it means to be a shepherd.

Do you know anything about shepherding that you could share? What types of work does a shepherd do? (Solicit children's comments.)

Wow, you sure know a lot about shepherding - which is kind of funny, because we don't see too many shepherds around these days, do we? They were very common when Jesus was alive though, and the Bible is full of shepherd stories - not to teach us about the real work of shepherds back then, but to help us understand something very important about Jesus.

Jesus is a special kind of shepherd. He doesn't have a flock of sheep - he has a flock of people - and we're them. We are Jesus' sheep!

That's kind of a funny thought, isn't it? We aren't really sheep of course, but the Bible helps us to understand that Jesus does the same things for us, that an actual shepherd does for his sheep.

You see, shepherds have three important jobs: herding, tending and protecting.

When we say that shepherds "herd," we mean that one of their jobs is to gather their sheep into groups. Where do we gather together because of Jesus? That's right! We come to church to learn about God and to celebrate being a part of his family. So that's one way, isn't it?

Shepherds are also responsible for "tending" their sheep. This means they take care of them. They feed them and clean them and take care of them when they're sick. (Hey, your parents are kind of like shepherds too!) Jesus doesn't come and feed us lunch or dinner, but he feeds our minds and he fills our hearts with love - so in that way he tends to us too.

Finally, shepherds have the important job of "protecting" their flocks. Just like a real shepherd would try to keep his sheep from danger, Jesus watches over us and protects us from harm.

Do you see why the Bible says that "The Lord is my shepherd?" I want you to listen carefully as we share today's readings and see how many times you hear about shepherds and sheep. I think you'll be surprised!

Will you pray with me?

Dear God,

Thank you for being our shepherd. We are so lucky to have you herd, tend and protect us.

Amen.