

LORDSBRIDGE TEAM OF CHURCHES



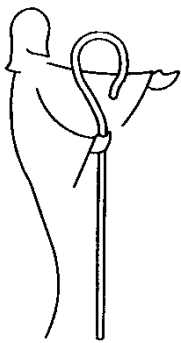
Fourth Sunday of Easter – 25th April 2021
Read John 10.11-18

You may like to use this material as a basis for discussion in your family.



Have you ever watched shepherds calling to their sheep, perhaps on the Countryfile programme on television or in fields when you have visited a sheep farming area? The sheep come running to the shepherd because they know that he is bringing food for them. Sometimes the shepherd uses a sheepdog to gather the sheep together; the shepherd uses a series of whistles or calls which the sheepdog understands.

In this passage from St John's gospel Jesus compares himself to a shepherd who cares for his sheep. The shepherd calls to his sheep, they know his voice and respond to him. How can we listen for Jesus' voice? The shepherd will look after the sheep even when there is danger nearby. When a wolf comes along and wants to steal the sheep, the shepherd will drive the wolf away. Jesus says that he will die for his sheep. We are the sheep (the followers of Jesus) and we know that Jesus died for us and rose from the dead for us. The idea of God or Jesus as a shepherd is used a lot in the Bible. There is a well-known psalm which starts "The Lord is my shepherd". Do you know which psalm this is? See if you can find the psalm in the Old Testament and read the whole of it.



Do you know what a shepherd's stick is called? What shape is it? Why is it shaped like that? Bishops carry one of these special sticks. This is to show that they care for people, like Jesus does.

Who cares for you – at home? at school? in the community?
Are there special people that you look after and care for?

Activity

- By comparing himself to a good shepherd, Jesus is explaining to the disciples how much he cares for his followers. This week make a care package for someone in need, containing food items and/or toiletries. Donate this to a friend, neighbour or through a local charity or Foodbank.

Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, for being our good shepherd and caring for us at all times.

Teach us to listen to your voice and follow you.

Help us to care for other people in the way that you care for us. Amen.