

# WHO IS THE TRUE SHEPHERD WE WAIT FOR?

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- TO HELP THE CHILDREN GAIN AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.
- TO HELP THE CHILDREN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOOD SHEPHERD IS GOD AND CHRIST IS THE ONE WE WAIT FOR.

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- COTTON-BALL SHEEP
- PAPER
- COLORED PENCILS OR CRAYONS,
- DAISIES.



## SCRIPTURE

- Gathering with Object
  - Get the attention of the children though mysteriously holding up a basket full of cotton ball sheep and asking children what they think is inside. Get one sheep out and introduce it to the children. Name it. Talk about how special it is. Talk about how much we love it.
  - Abruptly throw the sheep on the ground and start to tell a story of how the sheep gets lost, hurt, and rejected. Talk about how it is alone... waiting for someone to come and rescue it.
- Historical Background
  - Continue the story with introducing a shepherd who notices that one of his sheep is missing. The Shepherd searches for the sheep and finally finds it. He is sad his sheep got hurt and he takes care of it and loves it so much.
  - Discuss the historical relationship between a shepherd and a sheep.
    - Shepherds were people who watches over, protects, and provides for a group of sheep so that they can be happy, healthy, and safe.
- Facts about Shepherd
  - Discuss some of the characteristics of a shepherd.
    - Shepherds will do anything for their sheep.
    - Shepherds protect their sheep.
    - Shepherds spend time with their sheep.
    - Shepherds feed their sheep.
    - Shepherds find their sheep when they are lost.
    - Shepherds care for their sheep when they get hurt.
- Ritual of Bible Presentation
  - Say, "This is the living word of God, everything in it is true"
    - Give each child their own cotton ball sheep and ask them to sit in a circle and hold the sheep up to their heart and imagine that they are the sheep's shepherds. Tell the children that they are comforting and loving the sheep right now so they should hold them close.
- Read and Tell Story.
  - Read Ezekiel 34:11-16  
Tell Ezekiel 34:11-16 like it was a story.

# WHO IS THE TRUE SHEPHERD WE WAIT FOR?

## EXPRESS

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- Give each child a piece of paper and coloring utensils and ask them to draw a picture or write a poem about what God taught them in the story of the Shepherd coming and seeking after His sheep.

## LISTEN

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- Once the children have finished the express activity, invite them to share their insights. Teacher should model listening and encourage other student to listen and share with one another.
- Tell the children that it is time to share what they have created.
- Gather the children into a circle again and have each of them place their sheep on the floor in front of them.
- Teacher will hold up each child's picture and the child whose picture is being held up gets to pick up their sheep and explain what they drew and what God taught them.
- When they are finished explaining, they must put the sheep back at their feet.

## PRAY

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- Children are given the opportunity to express where they, like the sheep may need care or protection from a shepherd.
  - After each child shares, the group say a prayer in unison over the child who shared.
    - "Jesus, the Shepherd, helps insert child's name with insert child's need."

## BLESS

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- Give each child a daisy as they leave and say,
- "The people waited a long time for a good shepherd... and He is Jesus."

# THE GOOD SHEPHERD IS HERE

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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- TO HELP THE CHILDREN BEGIN TO MAKE THE CONNECTION THAT JESUS IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THEY ARE HIS SHEEP.
- TO HELP THE CHILDREN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE CARE AND LOVE JESUS, THEIR GOOD SHEPHERD HAS FOR THEM.

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

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- SMALL STONE OR PEBBLE FOR EACH CHILD
- 2-3 PERMANENT MARKERS
- A ROLL OF STREAMERS
- PAPER
- CRAYONS
- STUFFED ANIMAL.



## SCRIPTURE

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- Activity: Have the children sit in a circle with their sheep and introduce a small stone or pebble to each child. Tell the children that they must set their stones down in front of them so they can protect their sheep inside the stone circle.
- Historical context: Ask the children if they know anything about where sheep sleep. Tell them about how shepherds built stone pens to protect the sheep while they slept. Tell the children that the shepherd would take the place of the gate, laying in the opening of the pen to protect his sheep from outside animals.
- Read: Read Psalm 100:2-4 to the children.



## EXPRESS

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- Hand each child a paper and crayons. Ask the children to enter into a minute of silence to listen to God. Ask the children to draw where they go to be in God's presence.



## LISTEN

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- Once the children have finished the express activity, invite them to share their insights.
- After each child has shared give each child roughly a foot or two of streamer paper. Have the children celebrate with their streamers that Jesus is a safe place. The children can dance, run with, or wave their streamers.

# THE GOOD SHEPHERD IS HERE



## PRAY

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- Have the children sit back in a circle again and introduce a stuffed animal to the group. Tell the children that whoever is holding the stuffed animal has the turn to speak. Ask the children who a good shepherd in their life is, and have them share when they receive the stuffed animal.



## BLESS

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- Tell the children that they will be taking their stones hike to remind them to enter into God's presence. Tell the children that if they would like a blessing they can come up to one of the leaders. With a permanent marker have the leaders mark the child's stone with a symbol that the child chooses (a cross, heart, sheep, etc.). Explain to the children that just like the sheep entered into Jesus, the good shepherd's, pasture or pen that they can enter into his pasture too.

# THE GOOD SHEPHERD LOVES YOU AND WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- TO LEARN ABOUT THE ROLE OF SHEPHERD AS A PROTECTOR.
- TO HELP THE CHILDREN EXPLORE THE IDEA THAT GOD, AS THEIR GOOD SHEPHERD WILL PROTECT THEM.

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- 1 SMALL HAND WEIGHT (2-5LBS)
- BOX/BAG THAT CONCEALS IT



## SCRIPTURE

- Gather kids in circle by intriguing them with guessing what's in the box. (You can even pass it around so they can feel how heavy it is.)
- Then explain that shepherds had to protect their sheep from all sorts of danger. And only had a stick as a weapon. Ask the kids if they think shepherds are strong.
- Then reveal the weight explain its use and how people use it to grow stronger.
- This is The Living Word of God and everything in it is true.  
John 10:11-15; Isaiah 40:11
- Shepherd protected sheep from danger. They had his staff to fight off wolves. Shepherds would even die protecting their sheep.



## EXPRESS

- Draw your favorite part of the story / Scripture



## LISTEN

- Once the children have finished the express activity, invite them to share their insights.
- Let each kid hold their cotton ball sheep when its their turn to talk



## PRAY

- Have kids sit down and pump their arms as if they had weights in their hands (curls) then pass the weight around and let each kid pump it five times before giving it back to you and then you pass it to the next person. (Let them focus on the silence and rhythm.)



## BLESS

- Anoint with olive oil saying, "Know that you are one of God's sheep. God is strong and will do anything to protect you. You are special to God, your shepherd."

# BECAUSE WE LOVE OUR SHEPHERD, WE LISTEN TO HIM, AND LOVE HIM

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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- TO TEACH THE CHILDREN ABOUT THE LOVING AND CARING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOOD SHEPHERDS AND THEIR SHEEP.
- TO HELP THE CHILDREN EXPLORE THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS, WHO CALLS THEM, LOVES THEM, AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

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- CLOUD DOUGH ( 8 CUPS FLOUR, 1 CUP BABY OIL)
- PLASTIC SHEEP
- BABY WIPES FOR EACH CHILD TO WIPE THEIR HANDS OFF



## SCRIPTURE

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- Gathering with Object
  - Leader sits in the center of the room with the basket (sheep inside). Continuously peeks into the basket with excitement to get the children curious, but closes the basket quickly when the children try to peek.
  - Ask the children what they think is inside the basket. (By now the children, who have been there for previous lessons, will know, but that is okay... they will understand that you are playing with them!
  - Explain that each child will receive his/her own sheep to take care of. Explain that we have to be gentle and careful with our sheep because they are precious...just as a shepherd takes great care of his sheep.
  - Pass out a sheep to each child.
- Historical Background
  - Set the scene
  - Jesus was in the temple talking to the Jews
  - It was winter
- New fact about shepherds
- Read John 10:22-30



## EXPRESS

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- Have the kids put their sheep in a special spot. Remind them that shepherds never lose their sheep so they should put their sheep in a spot they will remember.
- Set out the cloud dough materials (flour and baby oil) and little toy sheep. The kids can gather around the table and watch as you make the cloud dough.

# BECAUSE WE LOVE THE SHEPHERD, WE SHOULD SHARE HIS LOVE



## EXPRESS

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- As you make the cloud dough, ask the kids these questions:
  - How do you think it would feel to be lost (like the sheep in the dough) and to hear a familiar voice calling out to you to find you?
- Cloud dough (represents snow, add sheep, and let them find the sheep).
- Come up with a specific call for your sheep when you find them.
- After asking them the questions and once the cloud dough is ready (with little sheep hidden inside the dough), each child can take his/her turn sifting through the dough to find a little sheep...calling out "Tahoo" or with his/her own sheep call.
- Have the children put the toy sheep back in the dough and tell them to go find their cotton ball sheep that they hid earlier.



## LISTEN

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- Once the children have finished the express activity, invite them to share their insights.
- Come back to a circle.
- Ask the children how they felt once they found their sheep? Do they feel happy and relieved? Were they scared for their sheep?
- How do you think the good shepherd would feel when they found their sheep? Jesus is the good shepherd who will never leave us and nothing can keep us from him. He will go to any length to find us, just like you did to find your sheep.

# BECAUSE WE LOVE THE SHEPHERD, WE SHOULD SHARE HIS LOVE

## PRAY

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- Give each child a crayon/marker and a blank sheet of paper (if too distracting, you can pass it out after prayer).
- Hold their cotton ball sheep to focus on while they pray.
- Light one candle in the middle of the room (Not necessary but it helps set the mood of the silent time).
- Time of silence (approx. 30 sec).
- Each child can draw/write down what they heard from God during the prayer/silent time.
- Get into groups and have each child share what he/she drew (make sure to share what you drew too!).

## BLESS

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- Explain the significance of olive oil for the shepherds and their sheep. The shepherds would use olive oil to help heal a sheep's wounds.
- Tell the class that they can get their blessing on their forehead or their hand.
- Use oil to bless each child before they leave. "The good shepherd, Jesus, will always keep you."



# BECAUSE WE LOVE THE SHEPHERD, WE SHOULD SHARE HIS LOVE

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- TO TEACH THE CHILDREN THAT GOD & JESUS AS OUR GOOD SHEPHERD IS ONE OF THE EARLIEST AND RICHEST IN THE BIBLE AND THAT THE ROLE OF BEING A SHEPHERD HAS BEEN PASSED DOWN SINCE THEN TO EVERY GENERATION.
- TO INSPIRE THE CHILDREN TO GO OUT AND FOLLOW JESUS AS SHEPHERDS TO OTHERS.

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- CARDBOARD SHEEP
- PAINT BRUSHES
- CLOVER SHAPED COOKIES
- LITTLE STAFFS
- PAPER
- MARKERS OR CRAYONS



## SCRIPTURE

- You will need to have a cardboard cutout sheep, as well as brushes, a water bowl and “food” for the sheep. Ask volunteers to come up and show how they would take care of the sheep (they should be able to recall this from previous lessons). The “food” will be clover cookies for each child in the class.
- After a few children demonstrate caring for the sheep’s needs, talk about the historical responsibilities of a shepherd and discuss how Jesus is “handing over” those responsibilities to His followers. Moses, Abraham, and David were all important shepherds in the Bible, as well as major leaders that God chose to love and lead His people. Describe that Jesus must think we are really special to have given us a job this big.
- New fact to share: Shepherds carry a staff, which is a symbol of protection, power, and authority. When the sheep saw it, they felt safe.



## EXPRESS

- Ask the children to draw on a sheet of paper what they feel God taught them through the scripture



## LISTEN

- Once the children have finished the express activity, invite them to share their insights.
- Reflect on the “taking care of the sheep” activity and how sheep’s needs are met by the shepherd
- Relate this to other people. How should you treat your brothers and sisters in Christ? How does Jesus want us to treat others?
- Ask them to discuss what they drew and gained from the lesson.

# BECAUSE WE LOVE THE SHEPHERD, WE SHOULD SHARE HIS LOVE



## PRAY

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- Ask the children to sit in a circle and each pray that God would make them shepherds and help them with their shepherd “duties.”
- Pray about loving others.
- Ask children what they need prayer for.



## BLESS

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- Have little shepherd staffs prepared for each child to take with them.
- Bless them as a shepherd for God and send them out to love God’s people.