

## **Now What?! Learning from Experience**

### **Brainstorming Rules:**

1. No criticism. Be nice.
2. Wild, odd, disjointed ideas are fine.
3. There is no need to be practical while brainstorming.
4. Everything gets written down.
5. Look for metaphors.

### **Common Themes in the Bible:**

- God as Builder
- God as Shepherd (500+ times)
- God as Planter

## **Message Series: “All God’s People” or “Shepherd and Sheep”**

### **Week 1: “The Good Shepherd” or “God as Shepherd” or “The Gatekeeper”**

**Scripture:** John 10:1-18 (New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>1</sup>“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit.

<sup>2</sup>The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup>Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup>So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

<sup>11</sup>“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. <sup>13</sup>The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. <sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

**Synopsis:** How does the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd shape our understanding of how he guides and protects us?

**Felt need:** To know sacrificial love

**Visuals:**

**Media possibility:** “Jesus Is the Gate. Length: 2:21. Cost: \$15.00. Shepherds in Israel still use stone sheep pens today to protect their flocks from wild animals. The shepherds themselves serve as the gate by sitting in the narrow openings. Preview it at [www.sermonspice.com/product/44367/Jesus-is-the-gate](http://www.sermonspice.com/product/44367/Jesus-is-the-gate).

**Activity:**

**Music:** Psalm 23

**Hands-on item:**

**Drama/skit:**

**Other:**

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## **Week 2: “The Lord Is My Shepherd” or “MINE?!”**

**Scripture:** Psalm 23 (Contemporary English Version)

You, Lord, are my shepherd. I will never be in need.

<sup>2</sup> You let me rest in fields of green grass. You lead me to streams of peaceful water, <sup>3</sup>and you refresh my life. You are true to your name, and you lead me along the right paths.

<sup>4</sup>I may walk through valleys as dark as death, but I won’t be afraid. You are with me, and your shepherd’s rod makes me feel safe. <sup>5</sup>You treat me to a feast, while my enemies watch. You honor me as your guest, and you fill my cup until it overflows. <sup>6</sup>Your kindness and love will always be with me each day of my life, and I will live forever in your house, Lord.

**Scripture:** Psalm 23 (New International Version)

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. <sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, <sup>3</sup>he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

<sup>4</sup>Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. <sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. <sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

**Scripture:** Matthew 11:28-29 (New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>28</sup>“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

**Synopsis:** Jesus’ call to come and rest in him speaks directly to the heart and soul. Do we live as if the words of Psalm 23 are our own?

**Felt need:** To find rest in Jesus

**Visuals:**

**Media possibility:**

**Activity:** Healing service – hand-on prayer and anointing with oil

**Music:**

**Hands-on item:**

**Drama/skit:** Reader’s Theater using multiple translations

**Other:**

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### **Week 3: “The Rest of the Flock”**

**Scripture:** Luke 15:4-7 (Contemporary English Version)

<sup>4</sup>If any of you has a hundred sheep, and one of them gets lost, what will you do? Won’t you leave the ninety-nine in the field and go look for the lost sheep until you find it? <sup>5</sup>And when you find it, you will be so glad that you will put it on your shoulder <sup>6</sup>and carry it home. Then you will call in your friends and neighbors and say, “Let’s celebrate! I’ve found my lost sheep.”

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said, “In the same way there is more happiness in heaven because of one sinner who turns to God than over ninety-nine good people who don’t need to.”

**Scripture:** John 21: 15-19 (New Living Translation)

<sup>15</sup>After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”

“Yes, Lord,” Peter replied, “you know I love you.”

“Then feed my lambs,” Jesus told him.

<sup>16</sup>Jesus repeated the question: “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

“Yes, Lord,” Peter said, “you know I love you.”

“Then take care of my sheep,” Jesus said.

<sup>17</sup>A third time he asked him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, “Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.”

Jesus said, "Then feed my sheep.

<sup>18</sup>"I tell you the truth, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked; you dressed yourself and went wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will dress you and take you where you don't want to go." <sup>19</sup>Jesus said this to let him know by what kind of death he would glorify God. Then Jesus told him, "Follow me."

**Synopsis:** God cares for his flock, even those that stray. Do we?

**Felt need:** To answer Jesus' call to care for others

**Visuals:**

**Media possibilities:**

- "Grace" by the Skit Guys. Length: 3:38. Cost: \$17.98. In this conversation between Jesus and Peter, grace is illustrated when Jesus forgives the unforgiveable. Preview it at <http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/23490/Grace>.
- "Jesus Appears to His Disciples at Lake Galilee." Length: 4:36. Cost: ????. Visual liturgy. <https://www.bible.com/videos/1084-jesus-appears-to-his-disciples-at-lake-galilee-from-lumoproject-dot-com>.

**Activity:**

**Music:** Ninety Nine by Audio Adrenaline

**Hands-on item:**

**Drama/skit:** Reader's Theater using multiple translations

**Other:**

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## Additional Resources

**Scripture:** Isaiah 40:1-11 (New Living Translation)

<sup>1</sup>"Comfort, comfort my people," says your God.

<sup>2</sup>"Speak tenderly to Jerusalem. Tell her that her sad days are gone and her sins are pardoned. Yes, the LORD has punished her twice over for all her sins."

<sup>3</sup>Listen! It's the voice of someone shouting, "Clear the way through the wilderness for the LORD! Make a straight highway through the wasteland for our God! <sup>4</sup>Fill in the valleys, and level the mountains and hills. Straighten the curves, and smooth out the rough places. <sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. The LORD has spoken!"

<sup>6</sup>A voice said, "Shout!"

I asked, "What should I shout?"

"Shout that people are like the grass. Their beauty fades as quickly as the flowers in a field.

<sup>7</sup>The grass withers and the flowers fade beneath the breath of the LORD. And so it is with people. <sup>8</sup>The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever."

<sup>9</sup>O Zion, messenger of good news, shout from the mountaintops! Shout it louder, O Jerusalem. Shout, and do not be afraid. Tell the towns of Judah, “Your God is coming!”

<sup>10</sup>Yes, the Sovereign LORD is coming in power. He will rule with a powerful arm. See, he brings his reward with him as he comes. <sup>11</sup>He will feed his flock like a shepherd. He will carry the lambs in his arms, holding them close to his heart. He will gently lead the mother sheep with their young.

**Scripture:** Luke 19:1-10 (New Living Translation)

<sup>1</sup>Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town.

<sup>2</sup>There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. <sup>3</sup>He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. <sup>4</sup>So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way.

<sup>5</sup>When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. “Zacchaeus!” he said. “Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today.”

<sup>6</sup>Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. <sup>7</sup>But the people were displeased. “He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner,” they grumbled.

<sup>8</sup>Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, “I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!”

<sup>9</sup>Jesus responded, “Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup>For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.”

**Resources:**

- Hymnals, TFWS, bibles
- Worship and Music Planners (Karen has about 10 years’ worth)
- Kim Miller’s [\[re\]designing worship](#) (page 149, personalized version of Psalm 23)
- Shepherd’s crook, rocks, fabric, sheep (if we can find one), candles
- Hands-on items from the goody bag
- Lynne’s Shepherd and sheep picture (small copies too)

**Music ideas:**

- #139 The Kind of Love My Shepherd Is
- #136, 137, 2278 The Lord Is My Shepherd
- #2113 Lamb of God
- #2058 Shepherd Me, O God
- You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd