

SERVICE OF PRAYER AND PRAISE

This evening we gather to hear the beloved Psalm of David and to respond with our prayers and praise. Our prayers flow directly from God's Word through us. It is God who graciously invites us to pray, when He says: "*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV)

(**Bold** = congregation)

We begin in the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 23

PSALM 23 (ESV)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life

And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

PRAISE "*The Lord is my shepherd....*" (verse 1)

In verse 1 David uses the name of God – "Yahweh" – which expresses the power of God, and "Shepherd", which describes our loving relationship with God. Jesus uses the same imagery in John 10:11, when He refers to himself as the "good shepherd"

(We offer our **praises** to God in words and songs.)

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear.
And Grace, my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far
and Grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me.
His word my hope secures.



He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.
When we've been here ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun.

PETITIONS "... I shall not want" (verse 1)

Because God is our Good Shepherd and takes care of us, we can confidently offer our petitions to Him. God is our provider, as He demonstrated during the 40 years in the desert with manna and quail. Abraham experienced this wonderful provision on the mountain, when God substituted a ram for his sacrifice of Isaac. He called the place Yahweh Yirah, "The Lord will provide".

(We pray for others and for ourselves)

GRATITUDE

*He makes me lie down in **green pastures**. He leads me beside **still waters**.
He restores my **soul**. (Ps. 51, "He restores ME")
He leads me in **paths of righteousness** for his name's sake.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. (olive, healing, anointing king)
(We express our thanksgiving for God's goodness)*

FEARS

*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. (Ps. 23:4, ESV)
Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.
Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.
**Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge...**
Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.
Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts." (Psalm
51:1-4, 10-12, NIV)
(We silently confess our fears and doubt and are comforted by God's forgiveness)*

God's promises us that *Surely goodness and mercy^l shall follow me all the days of my life.*
We are forgiven in the Name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore we respond with our lives: I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

HYMN: THE LORD'S MY SHEPHERD

The King of love my shepherd is, Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His And He is mine forever.



Where streams of living water flow, My ransomed soul He leadeth
And, where the verdant pastures grow, With good celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, But yet in love He sought me
And on His shoulder gently laid And home rejoicing brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill With Thee, dear Lord, beside me,
Thy rod and staff my comfort still, Thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spreadst a table in my sight; Thine unction grace bestoweth;
And, oh, what transport of delight! From Thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise Within Thy house forever!

PRAYER & BLESSING

