

Even though I
walk through the
darkest valley, I will
fear no evil, for
you are with me.

PSALM 23:4

'I Am with you'

I am with you when things are going good,
when the way is bright and clear,
I am with you my child when life looks bleak,
and your vision is blurred with tears.

I am with you when Happiness fills your heart,
when the sun is shining bright,
I am by your side when you feel alone,
and you're surrounded by darkest night.

I am with you when you have many friends,
when others for you care,
I am always with you when you're alone,
your loneliness to share.

I am with you when you're radiant with health,
when you don't lack at thing,
I am next to you when you're in pain,
I am there to comfort bring.

My child, I will always be there for you,
remember that I care,
Remember that you're not alone,
I am there to your sorrows share!

I will always be with you till the end of the world,
I'll be there each step of the way,
I am with you every moment, each hour,
and each and every day *theonlyBible.com*

Call to worship


Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of His name; give to Him glorious praise! Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies come cringing to You. All the earth worships You and sings praises to You; they sing praises to your name (Psalm 66:1-4)

Opening Song; 'Shepherd of my Soul'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3JK0joYuLI>

opening Prayer

Loving Father, may we hear You, over all the other voices, saying to us today, "I am your hope – you are with me and I am with you". Lord, your word says, You are the hope for hopeless. So, we're running to You with both hands stretched out and grabbing on to You. Fill us up with hope and give us a tangible reminder today that hope is an unbreakable spiritual lifeline (Hebrews 6:19-20). Lord God, You know those things in our hearts that we barely dare to hope for, today we give them to You – trusting that You can do more than we could ever guess, imagine or request in wildest dreams (Eph 3:20). God, You are our hope. You are with us and we trust you.



God, please enlighten my mind with truth;
Inflame my heart with love;
Inspire my will with courage;
Enrich my life with service.
Pardon what I have been;
Sanctify what I am;
And order what i shall be.
Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in Heaven...

Psalm 23: 1-4;

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the 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...**

Joshua 1:9

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, **for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.**"

Reflection: 'For you are with me' - copied with permission from Rev Donald Thomson's book, 'Reflections on the 23rd Psalm'

A little story I once heard raised a smile. Two women were comparing their summer holidays and one of them said "We went to Tenerife." Her friend asked her, where is that?" The first lady said, "I don't know – we flew".

Would she be surprised that her holiday destination was nearer Morocco than Europe? Would she care, as long as the sun shone all day, and the hotel was the same as the photo in the brochure?

I can remember holidays when I was very young. I can remember a beach on Mull, a house in Benderloch, my grandparent's house in Mallaig and the white sands of Morar. But I can't remember all the details of how we got there.

I was too young and unconcerned to remember the details. That wasn't part of the holiday. Now I know that we travelled to Mallaig by train, and the other places by car.

It didn't matter how we travelled, as long as I was with my parents and older sister. The destinations left memories, not the journeys.

When we go on holiday when we are young, we put all our trust in our parents. They buy the tickets, or drive the car, park the suitcases, and make sure we all get to the right destination.

There was a Bible translator in a distant land who was struggling with a phrase in Jeremiah. "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him" (17:7). He was having difficulty with the word "confidence".

There didn't seem to be an exact equivalent. As he pondered the problem, one of the people who was helping him with the translation came into his hut and said in his own tongue, "I am so tried, I am going to lean all my weight on this chair." Problem solved! "Blessed is the man... who leans all his weight on the Lord."

The Psalmist says, "You are with me. He might just as well have said, "I can lean all the weight of my troubles on you." You are with me: You are not a distant potentate who rules by remote control. You can speak to me and I can speak to You. As I listen for your voice, I know You hear me."

The shepherd doesn't say to the sheep, "if you follow this path you will find grazing and a pool of water. Now off you go, and I'll see you later back at the sheepfold." He goes with them, leading the way, watching over them all the time.



The Good Shepherd Prayer



Jesus said: 'I am the good shepherd' and so we pray:
Good Shepherd, watch over us today in all we face and experience.
Never leave us or forsake us and journey with us always.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Good Shepherd, you know us as no-one else knows us. Guard us and keep us, as you guard and keep those whom we love. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Good Shepherd, we pray for the sick and the lonely; For the anxious and the bereaved; for those whose pain is beyond our comprehension. We stand with them and commend them to your care. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

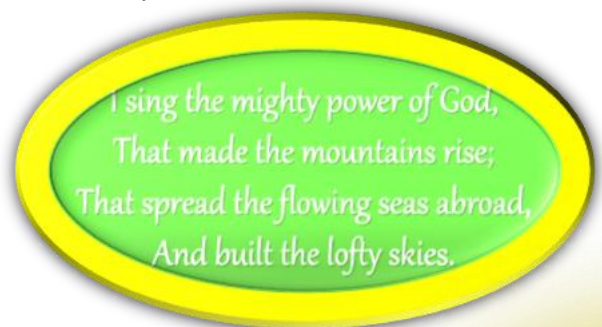
Good Shepherd, we pray for the carers in hospitals and in homes and for all who serve the needs of others. May the example of living compassion inspire us in our care for others. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Good Shepherd, you know the depths of our heart and the fears which are ours. Speak into the depths of our heart and calm our fears. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Good Shepherd, you know us by our name and our identity is not hidden from you. Gather us to yourself as a shepherd gathers the sheep, that we might know your Name. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**
Amen.

Closing Hymn: I sing the mighty power of God (Grace CC)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abr1xDbjC78>



Final blessings

May you know the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. May His spirit overshadow and consume you. May the song within you which sings for eternity, sing loudly. May the Father quiet the voices around you which tell you to settle for less than what He promises.

"Always be joyful. Pray continually and give thanks whatever happens. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

