



Diocese of Bristol

## Families growing faith at home

**Church@Home** is a fantastic all-age resource that has been created to encourage and help families enjoy a time of worship, explore the Bible, pray together and grow in their faith in the comfort of their own homes.

**Church@Home** provides a fun, engaging and easy-to-follow session every Sunday using a Bible reading selected from the Church of England Lectionary. Each session lasts approximately twenty minutes and provides age-related material for toddlers to teenagers to accommodate everyone in the family. Thought-provoking questions, fun activities and crafts bring the Bible story to life as well as creative prayer ideas to help families focus, learn and grow in their faith together. Additional teaching and craft suggestions are also provided for families with very young children.

**Church@Home** can also be used as a fun way to help families connect with other families on Sunday mornings too during this time of distancing. Invite everyone to begin **Church@Home** at the same time and perhaps set up a WhatsApp group where families can share what they have done, or discuss the topic further together.

If your family or families in your church are using **Church@Home** please let us know. We would like to keep in contact, find out how you are doing as well as hear how **Church@Home** is helping families grow in their faith, so that we can share and inspire others during this time of distancing.

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Thank you 



Sunday 25th April 2021  
4th Sunday of Easter

# The good shepherd

## John 10: 11-18

### Time to focus...

Find a place where the family can all sit comfortably - around the table, on the lounge floor etc. As you gather, if possible, light a candle to mark the beginning of your worship time. Quietly stare at the candle, watching the flames flicker and glow.

### Set the scene...

Do you have any pets, or do you know someone who owns a pet? A lot of pets recognise their owners voice when they are called because this creature knows their owner cares about it and will take care of it.

### Watch the story...

Today's reading "I am the good shepherd" beautifully illustrated by [CartoonWorks](#).

### Explore the story...

Do you know what a shepherd does? A shepherd is responsible for taking care of sheep. There are some people who are shepherds now, but in the times of the Bible there were even more of them. The shepherd would guide the sheep to places where they could find grass to eat, water to drink, and a place to rest. Sheep are not always terribly smart, but they learn to follow the shepherd.

Sheep know when the shepherd is talking to them and follow along, recognizing that the shepherd will lead them to good things. If a wolf or a bear tries to come attack the flock, the shepherd must protect his sheep, and be willing to fight off the predator. Sometimes, the shepherd even acts as a door! See, the sheep would often get herded into a fenced-in space together, and the shepherd would lie down right in the opening. Anything that tried to enter or leave the pen would have to come through him first, so he could monitor and make sure all of the sheep stayed safe.

In our Gospel today, Jesus compared Himself to a shepherd. He said that He was the gateway. Jesus is the way to life, and we are like sheep, wandering around and needing guidance. We can trust in Jesus to provide for us and to protect us. He said that a good shepherd would even lay down his life for the sheep, and that's exactly what Jesus did!

We can trust in His promises and rejoice that Jesus our shepherd has rescued us from sin and death. We can listen for His voice through prayer, Scripture, and discernment. And we know that He cares. Each of us is precious in God's eyes, and we can rest assured that He listens when we call to Him, and gives us life. What a blessing! We should thank God for that today...

### End in prayer...

Thank you Jesus for being the Good Shepherd. Help us to listen for your voice and to follow you and trust you. We know you will guide us and protect us. Thank you for caring about us. Thank you for your love. We love you, God! In Jesus name, Amen!



Sunday 25th April 2021  
4th Sunday of Easter

# The good shepherd

Creative ideas / toddlers to teenagers

0-5s...

**Fun activity:** A good shepherd always counts their sheep (Jer. 33:13). Every sheep is important to the shepherd and when a sheep is missing; they will call and call, search and search until they find it. Print out pictures of [sheep](#) and hide them in the room, home and if the weather is nice, outside too. When you have found all the sheep remember that Jesus is the good shepherd, He loves us and guides us to God.

5-11s...

**Worship:** Enjoy this action-packed song; "[Oh my shepherd](#)"


**Activity:** The 0-5s activity above adapted for older children...


A good shepherd knows their sheep (Jer. 33:13). When one goes missing the shepherd will call and call, search and search until they find it. Print off several copies of this [colouring sheet](#), colour in and name the sheep so that they are your sheep. Take it in turns hiding the sheep around the home - and outside if the weather is nice - and when you have found all the sheep, sit quietly as a family remembering and thanking Jesus because he is the good shepherd,

**Bible Chat Mat:** Or click on the link for another great colouring-in sheet from Bath and Wells Diocese - and explore "[I am the good shepherd](#)" together.

11-18s...

- 1) What do you know about sheep and the way they behave?
- 2) Why is it important for sheep to know the voice of their shepherd?
- 3) What does it mean when Jesus says, "I am the gate"?

 Ask God to help you recognise his voice.

 Read and reflect on Psalm 23.

*"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me - just as the Father knows me and I know the Father" - John 10: 14-15*