

1. Get Acquainted: Icebreaker – 2 options

The theme of shepherd and Christmas made me think of Christmas Eve Services complete with Nativity Scene and live actors.

- What was a favorite role or memory from a Christmas Eve Service growing up?
- Fun Memories:
 - Who played in the most roles?
 - Any solos in the group?
 - Any catastrophes?

2. Worship: Being a Sheep and Loving Every Minute of it!

I used to think to be a sheep was a sin. Actually it is a great blessing or better said it “necessaries our relationship with our God, our Shepherd” like few other features of our design. So rather than confessing your “sheepness weakness” as a sin let’s worship God for making us weak and needy so that we would know the wonder of relying on our Father, Brother Jesus and Holy Spirit. Read Psalm 23 stopping after reading each verse to share whatever sheep qualities you notice then have a couple folks praise God for what you have noticed.

Psalm 23:1-6 (ESV)

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

³ He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

⁴ 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.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

3. Kingdom Centered Prayer: Leaders - Competent, Caring, Steadfast

Pray for the leaders of our country, our state, our city, our workplaces and our families.

Pray for their competence and skill.

Pray they will be caring and thoughtful.

Pray they will love.

4. Sermon Reflection:

John 10:1-21 (ESV).

¹ “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

¹² He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³ He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

¹⁹ There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. ²⁰ Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?”

²¹ Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

You are my sheep

- How do you know yourself to be sheep?
- How are you fighting against enjoying your sheep features?
- What are the sheep features you hate or judge in others?
- Which of your sheep features help you to love better the other sheep in your life?

False Shepherds vs Good Shepherds - Good Shepherds are Competent, Caring, Steadfast.

- What have been your experiences with False Shepherds?
 - How did their leadership affect you?
- How did God build your faith in Him through False Shepherds that you have followed?

I am the Door/ the Good Shepherd

- How have you known and enjoyed Jesus as the Door that kept you in the pen safe and sound?
- How has he been your Good Shepherd in 2019?

5. Mission: 2019 Reflection / 2020 Anticipation

We, as Christians, are told to forget not all his benefits and to be at the ready. Here are some questions we use around Trinity to help us do just that. Have fun with your group and spend some time reflecting on God's goodness to you in a way that builds energy, hope and encouragement for the coming year. Have someone take notes. We have some folks answers that go back to 2015.

1. How has God shown Himself great to you this past year? Or why do you faith more cuz of 2019?
2. What character quality is the most critical for you to develop in the year 2020?
3. What spiritual discipline (Examples: Bible reading, meditation, Family Worship, Evangelism, Prayer) is most critical for you to master or be mastered by in the year 2020?
4. What personal habit, practice or character deficiency is the greatest threat to your life and ministry?
5. Name 5 people that you most desire to come to love Jesus in the year 2020.
6. How has God called you to "labor" for the Lord of the Harvest this coming year?