

## Sermon followed by Service

May 8, 2022

John 10:

On a scale of 1-5 how safe do you feel safe? When they talk of war, World War 3, or you hear of shootings down the street ... when it's all dark and you hear strange noises ... when you're alone and you get strange calls ... when the bully picks ... when the boss rails ... when the creep gets close? How safe do you feel? When you're sick, your family is sick, when that lump or that mole keeps getting bigger and bigger? How secure in life do you feel?

Sometimes about as safe and secure as a sheep in the wild. What can a sheep do about the cougar or coyote? What can the sheep do about the butcher-man? In the same way we might think: "What can I do? What can I do about that bully, that stalker, that cancer? What can I do with all that Satan has going against me?" At times, instead of feeling safe and secure, we might feel like a sheep, like a sheep alone in the wild, like a sheep stalked and marked as meat. Listen to what Jesus says for you in our lesson.

*When do you feel less than "safe and secure"?*

In our lesson the people Jesus is talking to were not his sheep. They didn't want to listen to him; they weren't there to follow him. They went after Jesus to pick a fight and Jesus didn't back down. He challenged them, and they picked up stones to stone him. It could have turned deadly, but Jesus was in control.

Today we'll leave their fight behind and focus on the Good News  
- Jesus' promise and power to keep his sheep safe.

*Isn't it amazing? Jesus has people squaring off against him, and what does his heart just have to talk about? Taking care and giving life to his sheep! I'll say it again - isn't it amazing? Jesus has people squaring off against him because of the claims he has been making, and what kind of claims does Jesus continue to make? He doesn't back down, does he?!*

Jesus said, **“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”**

Sounds good, doesn't it? When you feel danger in you or around you, when you feel like you're marked for meat or marked for trouble, when you feel like you're all alone and on your own, when you don't know what's going on or what to do, it's so good to hear Jesus say: “I know my sheep. I know you.” Jesus isn't just saying: “I know my sheep; I know who's with me and who's against me.” He's not just saying: “I know my sheep; I've got your name and number; I've got a file on you somewhere.” And Jesus sure isn't saying: “I know you; I know how to get to you; I know how to get my way with you.” No, this is the Jesus who said: “I am the Good Shepherd. I give my life for the sheep.” When Jesus says he knows you, you're not just a name and number to him. When Jesus says he knows you, that's not a threat. When Jesus says he knows you, that's love.

Jesus knows what you need, what your heart needs. He knows where you're weak, where you hurt. He knows what scares you, the danger in your life. He knows when you're close to the edge, where you tend to get lost. Jesus knows you; he knows what you need to keep you safe.

*What does it mean for you that Jesus knows the challenges and troubles you are facing? We might have a voice inside us that charges that if Jesus knows but doesn't solve and resolve, then Jesus must not care. How do we answer that voice?*

And listen to what Jesus promises you. **“I give [my sheep] eternal life, and they shall never perish.”** Jesus doesn't mess with the small stuff here, does he? He doesn't sweat the small stuff; he goes right for the biggest, the baddest, the worst, the most impossible trouble in this world. Jesus gives the answer for death. I know it doesn't look or feel that way. Our bodies get old; we break down. We get sick and we get cancer. Unless the end of the world comes first, we'll have to face it - our hearts will stop pumping, our brains will stop waving, and our bodies that we spend so much time primping and preening will rot. Oh, it sounds awful, doesn't it? But what did Jesus say? **“I give [my sheep] eternal life, and they shall never perish.”** With the power that made Jesus alive and well in heaven, Jesus will make us, body and soul, alive and powerful and glorious in heaven.

Unless what? The only time death could be dangerous would be if we tried to face death without our Shepherd. And why would we do that? Oops. Because we're like sheep; and sheep tend to act like they've got a bad case of stupid. Sheep without a shepherd tend to go the wrong way - out of safety, into danger, into trouble. And what about us? When we're on our own, what do we tend to do? Do we drift toward God or away from God? Toward God, or toward the world? What did Isaiah say? **“We all like sheep have gone astray; each of us has turned to his own way.”**

Now there's a part of us that thinks: What's so bad about going our own way? Well, on our own, have we found the answer to death? I know we have vaccines and vitamins, chemo and radiation, always new and better treatments for this and for that. But have we found the answer for death? I know we've found ways to try to look good in death, make-up and pretty shiny jars and boxes, but who has what it takes to look good before God, before the God who judges: **“the soul that sins, it shall die”**? Who has what it takes to look good before the God who damns: **“Depart from me into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels”**? If we're honest with ourselves, we'll admit it: we don't want to face death or God on our own.

But our Good Shepherd hasn't left us to face death or God on our own. Instead, our Good Shepherd joined us, took our place; he became a sheep like one of us. Not just to hang out with us, not just to show us how it's done, but to take our place as guilty. In our place, as the Lamb of God, Jesus was sacrificed on the cross, cursed and killed to pay for your sin and my sin and the

sin of the whole world - to set us right with God. How about that for a Good Shepherd? A Shepherd willing to take the place of his sheep, a shepherd willing to die so that his sheep can live.

But we aren't here today celebrating a dead shepherd; we aren't here resting our hope on a dead shepherd. That picture over the altar isn't a memorial to a dead shepherd. With Easter, Jesus lives! Alive with God and alive with us, the Lamb is our living Shepherd! He lives to give you life; he lives to give you peace - "no matter how you've wandered, you're forgiven." He lives with his hands and arms around you to keep you safe with him. What does that mean? The bugs that make us sick; the people who make us miserable; the accidents and disasters that turn our lives upside down -- no one and nothing can snatch you out of Jesus' hand; no one and no thing can snatch you out of God's hug.

So who is the enemy in your life? What is the fear in your life? Look to your Good Shepherd; listen to his promise: "I know you; I've got you; no one can snatch you away from me." That's not just me talking; that's not just some guy talking. That's your Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd who faced danger and death and came out on top. The Good Shepherd who saw his people lost and empty and fed them, all 5000+ of them, he fed them body and soul. He's the Good Shepherd who saw the fear in his disciples and with a word hushed the storm. He's the Good Shepherd who saw his people sick and the broken and healed them. He's the Good Shepherd who saw the dying and dead and raised them life. That Good Shepherd is your Good Shepherd -

working his power for you, working his love for you, working his life for you. Amen.

*What are your favorite Good Shepherd miracles?*

*What are your favorite Good Shepherd promises?*

*What kind of Good Shepherd confidence do we get to have and share?*

# St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

*A Family Connecting in Christ*



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# WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

## To Our Guests

- We pray that you receive a warm welcome and are blessed by the message of God's Word in our lessons and hymns. If you have questions, please ask!
- Our service is designed to focus us on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit does that by exposing our need for Christ and by showing us the wonders of God's grace in Christ – forgiveness and peace, help, and hope for life in this world, and life forever with God in heaven.
- Please join us after Sunday service for fellowship and Family Bible Hour.

## Our Communion Practice

We practice close communion, the Biblical and ancient practice of the church. We invite our congregation members and visitors from sister WELS or ELS congregations to join us, but ask Christians from other denominations to kindly respect our practice. Further explanation is in the pew racks or from our pastor.

## We Care about Your Children

We love to have children with us in worship.

- Children's worship bulletins and "church bags" (with paper, colors, and Bible story books) are available in the Narthex Gathering Area.
- If your children are crying loudly, our nursery, Gathering Area (back of church), and downstairs Fellowship Hall are audio-equipped for you and your young children. When your children are ready, come back so we can worship together.

## We Care about Your Special Needs

- **Large Print** Service Folders are available from an usher.
- **Hearing Assistance** for those with hearing aids is provided through our Hearing Loop or personal hearing devices available at the "sound table."
- A **wheelchair lift** is available for your assistance; please ask an usher.



## Our Facilities

Restrooms are in our Fellowship Hall, downstairs and to the right of the kitchen.

## Our Ministry

St. John offers an excellent preschool-8th grade school program. We are members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) - [www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net).



May 7 & 8, 2022

## DIVINE SERVICE II

**IN OUR WORLD TODAY ...** we see all kinds of reasons for concern, even alarm.

**IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ...** we hear the promise of our Good Shepherd and we sing out the confidence he gives us - "The Lord is my Shepherd! He has me safe with him, today and forever!"

**OPENING HYMN**

*"The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want"*

Hymn 555

**INVOCATION**

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

**CONFESSION**

M: Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

C: **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.  
For faithless worrying and selfish pride,  
For sins of habit and sins of choice,  
For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,  
I deserve to be cast away from your presence forever.  
O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

**ABSOLUTION**

M: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

**LORD, HAVE MERCY (Kyrie)**

M: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

M: For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.

**C: Christ, have mercy.**

M: For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

M: Lord of life, live in us that we may live for you.

**C: Amen.**

**CHOIR HYMN**

*“The Lord’s My Shepherd”*

*Hymn 554*

*The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want; he makes me lie in pastures green.  
He leads me by the still, still waters, his goodness restores my soul.*

***Refrain***

*And I will trust in you alone, and I will trust in you alone,  
for your endless mercy follows me, your goodness will lead me home.*

*He guides my ways in righteousness, and he anoints my head with oil,  
and my cup, it overflows with joy, I feast on his pure delights.*

***Refrain***

*And though I walk the darkest path, I will not fear the evil one,  
for you are with me, and your rod and staff are the comfort I need to know.*

***Refrain***

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Good Shepherd who laid down your life for the sheep. Lead us now to the still waters of your life-giving Word that we may abide in your Father's house forevermore; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## READING

*Revelation 7:9–17*

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

“Salvation belongs to our God,  
who sits on the throne,  
and to the Lamb.”

All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying:

“Amen!  
Praise and glory  
and wisdom and thanks and honor  
and power and strength  
be to our God for ever and ever.  
Amen!”

Then one of the elders asked me, “These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?”

I answered, “Sir, you know.”

And he said, “These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore,

“they are before the throne of God  
and serve him day and night in his temple;

and he who sits on the throne  
will shelter them with his presence.

‘Never again will they hunger;  
never again will they thirst.

The sun will not beat down on them,’  
nor any scorching heat.

For the Lamb at the center of the throne  
will be their shepherd;

‘he will lead them to springs of living water.’

‘And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’”

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

*Psalm 23F*

1 My shep - herd will sup - ply my need, Je -  
2 When I walk through the shades of death, his  
3 The sure pro - vi - sions of my God at -

ho - vah is his name; in pas - tures fresh he  
pres - ence is my stay; one word of his sup -  
tend me all my days; oh, may his house be

makes me feed be - side the liv - ing stream.  
port - ing breath drives all my fears a - way.  
my a - bode and all my work be praise.



He brings my wan - d'ring spir - it back when  
 His hand, in sight of all my foes, will  
 There would I find a set - tled rest while



I for - sake his ways and leads me, for his  
 still my ta - ble spread; my cup with bless - ings  
 oth - ers go and come, no more a stran - ger



mer - cy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.  
 o - ver - flows; his oil a - noints my head.  
 or a guest but like a child at home.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*John 10:14*

Alleluia. I am the good shepherd;  
 I know my sheep and my sheep know me. Alleluia.

**GOSPEL**

*John 10:22–30*

Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon's Colonnade. The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

## APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"*  
Hymn 552

## SERMON

## HYMN

*"Jesus, Shepherd of the Sheep"*  
Hymn 551

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*Brief intercessory prayers may be added at the end of the prayer.*

**M:** Eternal God, in the beauty of Eden you created a man and a woman and brought them together in marriage. You enabled them to be fruitful and increase in number and so you established the family. Help us to see in your creating wisdom your love for parents and children.

**C:** **Move us to be thankful for mothers and fathers and for all the blessings you bring to our homes.**

M: Today we remember the mothers who loved us even before we were born, who endured childbirth, and who cared for us when we could not care for ourselves. On this day and on other days cause us to recall the hours they spent and the sacrifices they made so that we could be content and carefree as we grew up.

**C: Lead us to express our thanks and return the love our mothers showed to us.**

M: We cannot thank you enough for mothers and fathers, too, who brought us to Holy Baptism, taught us simple prayers at mealtime, and read us Bible stories at bedtime. Forgive us for resenting their correction and ignoring their guidance as they desired to keep us on the narrow path of life with Christ.

**C: Never let us forget the Christian training they gave to us.**

M: We remember with compassion the mothers who were not always able to reflect your love in our lives. Help us understand the pressures they carried and the sadness they experienced. Take away unhappy memories and rid us of resentment.

**C: Lead us to forgive them as you have forgiven us.**

M: We confess our failures to hold our parents in love. For the naughtiness of childhood, the flare-ups of youth, the overconfidence of adulthood, and for all the words and actions spoken in haste and to hurt, we ask you and our parents for pardon.

**C: Give us courage to make up for past sins when we can.**

M: As their minds and bodies age, help us to support our parents as well as we can. Give us patience to accept their struggles for independence and strength to deal with their weaknesses. Enable us to keep them mindful of Jesus and his promises of a perfect life in heaven.

**C: As they brought us to your Word, so lead us to keep them close to your Word.**

M: Keep in your care all the mothers of our world. Comfort mothers who have been separated from their children. Give strength to mothers who care for children who are sick or troubled. Encourage mothers in societies where mothering is disrespected or discouraged. We pray especially for those who long to be mothers but have not been so blessed.

C: **We pray you to preserve and protect the blessed task of motherhood.**

M: Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer.*

M: So many women have influenced our lives. Lead us to think about their wisdom, compassion, patience, and encouragement and give us opportunities to say thank you when we can. Help us imitate their care for us as we work and play with children and young adults.

C: **Strengthen us to love others as Jesus loved us. Amen.**

#### PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

#### BLESSING

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. Amen.

#### CLOSING HYMN

*"Jerusalem the Golden"*

Hymn 889



## OFFERING

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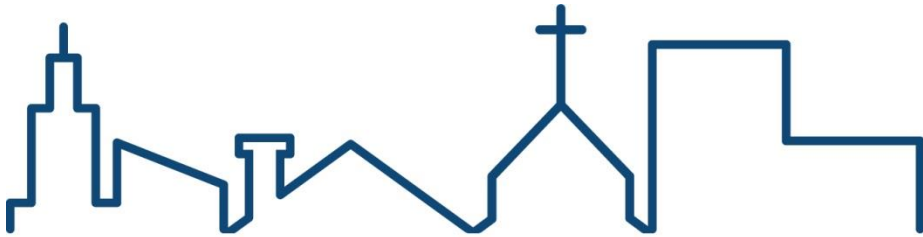


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## Join us for Vacation Bible School!

Join us, **June 20-23, 9-11 a.m.** at St. John Lutheran Church and School for Vacation Bible School! Summer is a great time for VBS! Sign up at [www.stjohnslib.com](http://www.stjohnslib.com). Sign up is eligible for children over the age of three who are toilet trained to 8th grade.



# EVERYONE OUTREACH

BUILDING A CONGREGATIONAL OUTREACH CULTURE

Imagine a congregation reaching out to strangers - wonderful, right?! Imagine hundreds of Jesus-loving people sharing their love of Jesus and ready to reach out to anyone and everyone in their lives - that sounds even more wonderful, doesn't it? We can be - and we are - those people and that congregation. How can we be more natural and more intentional in reaching out? Join us for EveryOne Outreach - a workshop split over two days to help us be a more powerful force sharing the life and the love of Jesus!

**For more info**, check out the EveryOne Outreach website - [EveryOneOutreach.com](http://EveryOneOutreach.com)

**Mark your calendar** for October 8-9, 2022, and sign up in the Narthex today!