

Sunday, April 21, 2024

Scripture Reading: Psalm 23

It takes some of us a lifetime to learn that Christ, our Good Shepherd, knows exactly what he is doing with us. He understands us perfectly.

—Phillip Keller

This story is about how a well-known hymn emerged from the horror of the American Civil War, and is told by the author of the lyrics, Joseph Gilmore.

He had been speaking at a mid-week service in March 1862, and his subject was Psalm 23. It was a text with which he was quite familiar for he had used it several times in his ministry. This time, however, he couldn't get past the words, "He leadeth me." The entire verse is "He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul" (KJV). He said, "Those words took hold of me as they had never done before, and I saw them in a significance and wondrous beauty of which I had never dreamed."

He went on to explain that "It was the darkest hour of the Civil War. ... [I] realized that God's leadership is the one significant fact in human experience, that it makes no difference how we are led, or whither we are led, so long as we are sure God is leading us."

After the service, he grabbed a blank sheet of paper and quickly scrawled out the words to a hymn as though inspired by the Holy Spirit. Later, unbeknownst to him, his wife sent the lyrics to a publisher. They were set to music, and, in subsequent decades and to this day, continue to provide inspiration and comfort to those who hear it or sing it.

*He leadeth me, O blessed thought!
O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.
He leadeth me, He leadeth me,
By His own hand He leadeth me;
His faithful follower I would be,
For by His hand He leadeth me.*

—Timothy Merrill. Adapted from Hymnary.org.

Prayer: Loving God, I praise your name for being my Shepherd and for leading me to green pastures and still waters. Thank you for your loving care! In Jesus' name. Amen.

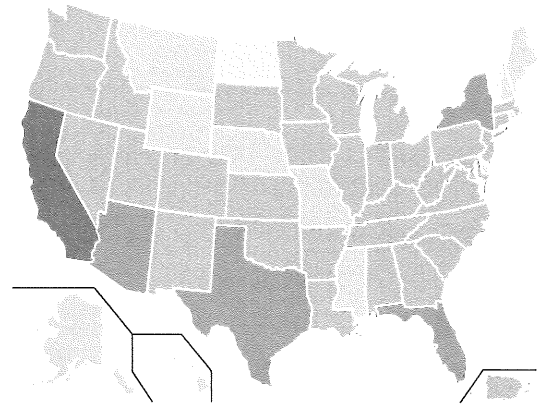
*Blessings on Good Shepherd Sunday!
Liam & Pastor Ben Motz*

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Luke 7-9; **Monday:** Joshua 19-21; **Tuesday:** Joshua 22-24; **Wednesday:** Judges 1-4; **Thursday:** Judges 5-8; **Friday:** Judges 9-12; **Saturday:** Psalms 37-39

HOW MANY STATES HAVE YOU VISITED?

We live in a beautiful country with many national parks and big cities. Our country features rugged mountains, sprawling farmland, deserts and spectacular coastlines. This activity will help you relive some of your experiences. Place a check mark beside each state you have visited. Think about what you did, or who you saw, while there. Perhaps you visited a friend or family member, or went to a museum and saw some wonderful scenic areas. The next time a friend comes to visit you, show them your list. Ask them what states they have visited.



THE 50 STATES OF THE U.S.A.

State	✓	State	✓	State	✓	State	✓
Alabama		Indiana		Nebraska		S. Carolina	
Alaska		Iowa		Nevada		S. Dakota	
Arizona		Kansas		N. Hampshire		Tennessee	
Arkansas		Kentucky		New Jersey		Texas	
California		Louisiana		New Mexico		Utah	
Colorado		Maine		New York		Vermont	
Connecticut		Maryland		N. Carolina		Virginia	
Delaware		Massachusetts		North Dakota		Washington	
Florida		Michigan		Ohio		W. Virginia	
Georgia		Minnesota		Oklahoma		Wisconsin	
Hawaii		Mississippi		Oregon		Wyoming	
Idaho		Missouri		Pennsylvania			
Illinois		Montana		Rhode Island			



“April showers bring forth May flowers.” —English proverb