



The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
Psalm 23: 1



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Greeting

Greetings to you in the love and peace of Jesus Christ!

Call to Worship †§

- L: In the laughter of children, we hear the voice of the Gate of the Way, and find our way home.
P: **In the lap of a parent, God's compassion cradles us in the still waters of love.**
L: The Shepherd of our lives leads us through that door into life with him forever.
P: **We are baptized with living waters which refresh us, restoring us to follow Jesus all our days.**
L: The Holy Spirit, Keeper of truth, is the Light which guides us through every shadowed moment.
P: **The Breath of life stills our worries and fears, as we are lead to that peaceful place of God's heart.**

Hymn 252

“Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrxxmObv2-s>

**Savior, like a shepherd lead us, much we need your tender care;
in your pleasant pastures feed us, for our use our folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have bought us, yours we are;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have bought us, yours we are.**

**We are yours, in love befriend us, be the guardian of our way;
keep your flock, from sin defend us, seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, hear your children when we pray;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, hear your children when we pray.**

**Let us always seek your favor; let us always do your will;
Jesus Christ our only Savior, with your love our spirits fill.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have loved us, love us still;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have loved us, love us still.**

Prayer of Confession †§

Gate of our lives, you know how easy it is to follow the wrong paths. We can make the foolish choice to listen to foolish rhetoric, and not to the wisest among us. We continue to make the mistake that we no longer need to be cautious, thus making life chancy for all around us. And while we have no trouble locking the doors of our hearts, we increasingly grow weary of all this social distancing stuff and the locked doors that separate us. Forgive us, please. May our hearts overflow with love for others, may we share from our abundance of caution with all who hunger for hope, and may we follow Jesus Christ to the places of service and life with you forever, even if only from the interiors of our homes. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon †§

- L: Our Comforter leads us to that place where forgiveness reigns and which is overflowing with grace. Here, we are called to life and love. Here, you are forgiven!

The Service of the Word

New Testament Lesson

Acts 2:42–47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Psalm 23

L: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

P: He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.

L: He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

P: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

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

P: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Gospel

John 10:1–10

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Sermon

Sermon Hymn 471

“What a Covenant”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrJ3WKNeRA>

**What a covenant, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms,
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the everlasting arms.**

Refrain

**Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.**

**Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way, leaning on the everlasting arms.
Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, leaning on the everlasting arms. *Refrain***

**What have I to dread, what have I to fear, leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Savior near, leaning on the everlasting arms. *Refrain***

The Response to the Word

Offering (*You may send your offerings to the church, or drop them off in person.*)

Special Music during the offering: The Five Blind Boys of Mississippi singing “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yhHIqsOanI>

Prayers of the People

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Benediction †§

L: Day by day, God will lead us:

P: **to those pools of peace where we can care for our friends and strangers even from a safe distance.**

L: Day by day, Jesus will call us:

P: **to give ourselves in service, to anoint others with hope, to stay in the safe places for the good of all of God’s people.**

L: Day by day, the Spirit shows us:

P: **the people we might be, the community we might become when once again we can gather. Amen.**

† <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com>

§ Written/modified by Rev. David Huber

Who we are...

Plymouth UCC is an Open and Affirming congregation, embracing diversity and affirming the dignity and worth of every person, since we are all created in God's image. We welcome into full membership and participation in the Body of Christ persons of every race, ethnic background, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, socio-economic background, marital status and background. We welcome all to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, humor, and blessings of participation in our congregation.

Spiritual Care Package

Question for Reflection

Acts 2:42–47 describes what life was like in the early church. How do these words guide today's church?

Household Prayer: Morning

Generous God, thank you for the gift of this new day. Help me to watch for your signs and wonders in the world today, and fill my heart with gladness and generosity, that I may generate good will wherever I go. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Thank you, God, for shepherding me through this day. As I lie down to sleep this night help me to imagine green pastures and still waters, and to remember all the ways you have set a table before me and filled my cup to overflowing. Amen.

God is still speaking,