

Reading for May 16th, 2021, 7th Sunday of Easter - lesson for 4th-6th grade

Read the below reading slowly listening for words or phrases that catch your attention. Read it again. Do you think you get a deeper understanding by re-reading the story multiple times? Do you find yourself focusing on different parts? What word(s) or phrase(s) stood out to you? Answer questions & do the activity below.

John 10:11-18

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

Discuss:

- ◆ Who does Jesus say he is?
- ◆ Why do you think he calls himself "the good shepherd"? What would you say if someone asked you, "How is God like a shepherd?"
- ◆ Who are Jesus' sheep? How well does Jesus know his sheep? Why would Jesus compare people to sheep?
- ◆ What is Jesus willing to do for the sheep?
- ◆ How can we get to know our Shepherd, Jesus?
- ◆ How can we listen to Jesus' voice?
- ◆ Do you remember other lessons you've heard in Sunday School that talk about the Good Shepherd?

Activity:

Read through these words.

- ◆ rest
- ◆ quiet
- ◆ strength
- ◆ guidance
- ◆ friendship
- ◆ help
- ◆ protection
- ◆ food
- ◆ drink
- ◆ love
- ◆ safety

These are ways in which shepherds take care of their sheep.

- ◆ How does Jesus provide these things?
- ◆ In what ways does Jesus provide these through our parents? friends? school or teachers? church?
- ◆ When do we do these things for our families? Our friends? strangers?
- ◆ Can you be a good shepherd?

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, ¹⁶ "Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus— ¹⁷ for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry."

²¹ So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." ²³ So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴ Then they prayed and said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵ to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his

own place.”²⁶ And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

NOTE: Acts is the fifth book of the New Testament and comes directly after the four gospels and tells stories about the Early Church. It's named "Acts" because it tells of the acts performed by the apostles (or disciples) after Jesus returned to heaven.

Discuss:

- ◆ How many people gather at this meeting? What do they have in common?
- ◆ According to verses 21-22, what task must be accomplished?
- ◆ What qualifications must the new person have?
- ◆ What two people meet the qualifications?
- ◆ How is Matthias chosen as the new disciple?
 - How was God involved in this process?
 - What do you think of this method?
- ◆ What can we do to be God's disciples today?

Activity:

Think of the people of St. Peter's. What are different ACTS you see them doing to serve God (or saw them doing pre-covid)? Can you name ACTS people carryout for St. Peter's? For the community? For other individuals? What ACTS can you do now? What ACTS do you see yourself doing in the future? Do you help with Street Fair? Do you plan on going on the mission trip when you are older? Do you participate in Family Church when you can? What ACTS can you do outside of St. Peter's so serve God?

Prayer:

Thank you, God, for all your disciples—people just like us who love and work for You. Amen.