

Overview of Collective Worship resources

For *The Good Shepherd Project*, we would like you to use your sheep in your Collective Worship. We recommend that you use the sheep in your Monday whole school gathering, and also arrange for your local clergy/church representatives to also visit once to lead a whole school Collective Worship based upon the sheep.

A video has been created to explain the sheep project to the pupils. Please show this on the first Collective Worship you have with the sheep. It is on the USB stick.

To help with the delivering of the Collective Worship, we have put together the following resources:

1. A [video](#) explaining the project for staff and pupils which is on the USB stick provided.
2. Four different collective worships for you to choose between based around Psalm 23 (the well-known *The Lord is my shepherd* psalm).
3. A PowerPoint and PDF to accompany the Collective Worship (also on the USB stick)
4. A set of [posters](#) to go around your school with biblical messages based around sheep to display during the sheep's visit and perhaps to keep up after it. Please laminate and display wherever you like.

Many thanks in advance for engaging in this exciting project. Please do use your sheep in your Collective Worship to engage your children spiritually in this project.

1. Sheepish (if you want something simple)



Time: 10-15 minutes

Resources:

- Psalm 23 PPT which is on the USB stick
(it can also easily be shown on screen via Bible Gateway:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+23&version=GNT>)

Welcome and opening

Brief liturgy to begin: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you [seek response of *and also with you*]

Main body

Show the video explaining the project. This is on the USB stick provided.

Read Psalm 23. Have it up on the screen. See resources attached for this.

If time permits, read it again, asking pupils to think about the words.

Ask the pupils if they have ever met a shepherd. They are unlikely to. But in some ways shepherds are like teachers. They guide, protect, lead and care for their sheep/pupils.

Ask pupils what a good teacher is like. Try to draw out ideas like caring, safe, strong, wise, fun, trustworthy, helpful, etc.

Now draw the link back to the psalm. What it is saying is that God is always like this. And the important part about this is he never changes, and he acts like that towards each and every one of us, no matter what has happened or is happening, because he loves us.

Christians believe that God is so good that he will always be wise, kind, trustworthy, helpful – and importantly, will always guide us in the things that we do.

Reflection:

Read the psalm once more, but this time substitute the words *me* and *my* with *you* and *your*.

Response:

Pupils close their eyes and hold in their heads something that they need help with at present. Allow God to come and take that from them, because he will help lead them through whatever it is.

Closing prayer: Loving God, we thank you that you are our Good Shepherd. We thank you that you never change, you are always good, and that you never leave us. We pray that you help us to trust you in our lives, to know that you love and treasure us, and to look to you when we feel lost. Amen

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Recommended songs:

The Lord is my Shepherd (linked to Psalm 23)

Lead me home (ISingPop3) (linked to idea of God guiding us)

How deep the Father's love for us (linked to the idea that God's love for us is vast)

Guide me O Thou Great Redeemer (linked to idea of God guiding us)

O When the Saints Go Marching in (linked to the idea that life is a journey)

Be Bold, Be Strong (linked to the idea that we can be bold in times that are difficult because we know that God walks with us)

2. Lambda (if you want a bit more pupil engagement and fun)



Time: 15-20 minutes

Resources:

- Blindfold if possible (school jumper will work otherwise)
 - Psalm 23 PPT which is on the USB stick

(it can also easily be shown on screen via Bible Gateway:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+23&version=GNT>)

Welcome and opening

Brief liturgy to begin: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you [seek response of *and also with you*]

Main body

Show the video explaining the project. This is on the USB stick provided.

Read psalm 23. Have it up on the screen. See resources attached for this.

If time permits, read it again.

Ask for a volunteer to come to the front and (if possible) blindfold them [a school jumper could do the job if there is nothing else available]. If the child is happy, gently spin them 5-6 times on the spot. Then leave them and walk to another part of the hall approx. 5 metres away. Can they walk towards you?

Ask for another volunteer to do the same. Copy the above almost exactly, but explain to everyone that at the end, when you call to the volunteer to come to you, they are to make lots of noise and try to confuse him/her.

After reflecting on both of these events, and regaining some level of calm, move onto looking at the psalm again.

God promises to always lead us in kindness and to guide us into good things.

But sometimes things are difficult because we feel confused and a bit lost (perhaps like the first person who was spun around).

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And sometimes things feel super confusing and you feel completely alone, unable to work out where you are at all. We can all feel like that sometimes.

And Christians believe that God promises to guide and protect us even when we are feeling our absolute worst. You see, God loves you completely, even when you're at your worst, even if it feels like it is your fault. He will never leave you alone. He will always help you, no matter how you feel, not matter what you have done.

The psalm says that:

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

Christians find hope and peace in knowing that God is with us especially when things are difficult.

Reflection:

Read and words *Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.*

Ask pupils to close their eyes and listen to the words again. Ask them to imagine God with them. Ask them to imagine him standing close, protecting them, and guiding them, in control. And then ask them to imagine him saying these words to them: *I will never leave you, no matter what.*

Response:

Pupils close their eyes and hold in their heads something that they need help with at present. Allow God to come and take that from them, because he will help lead them through whatever it is.

Closing prayer: Loving God, we thank you that you are our Good Shepherd. We thank you that you never change, you are always good, and that you never leave us. We pray that you help us to trust you in our lives, to know that you love and treasure us, and to look to you when we feel lost. Amen

Recommended songs:

The Lord is my Shepherd (linked to Psalm 23)
Lead me home (ISingPop3) (linked to idea of God guiding us)
How deep the Father's love for us (linked to the idea that God's love for us is vast)
Guide me O Thou Great Redeemer (linked to idea of God guiding us)
O When the Saints Go Marching in (linked to the idea that life is a journey)
Be Bold, Be Strong (linked to the idea that we can be bold in times that are difficult because we know that God walks with us)

3. Baaarmy (if you want a bit more energy and buzz)



Time: 15-20 minutes

Resources:

- Bowl of small sweets (e.g. skittles, smarties) and a pair of chopsticks
 - Psalm 23 PPT which is on the USB stick(it can also easily be shown on screen via Bible Gateway:
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+23&version=GNT>)

Welcome and opening

Brief liturgy to begin: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you [seek response of *and also with you*]

Main body

Show the video explaining the project. This is on the USB stick provided.

Read psalm 23. Have it up on the screen. See resources attached for this.

If time permits, read it again.

Having read the psalm through once or twice, tell pupils that we will be exploring what this psalm tells us about God.

Ask for a volunteer to come up and take as many sweets out of the bowl as they can. Expect a lot of volunteers and enthusiasm. Aim to choose a Y4-6 in the first instance (if applicable to your school). Once they are up, explain that the only hitch is that they have to use chop sticks to do this, and they have 20 seconds.

Having done this activity, once, tell them that another volunteer will be needed later after a few more thoughts about the Psalm.

Ask the pupils – is it easy to get sweets with chop sticks? Expect the answer no. Explain that for many people it is hard because they are not used to using them, even though for some people it might be very easy because they are.

Draw this onto the psalm. Christians believe that God is 100% loving, caring and good. They believe that God adores you. That God will never leave you. And that God will always guide you, even and especially when things are hard.

Ask for another volunteer to do the activity again. This should bring another spike of enthusiastic volunteers. Feel free to ask from any age group, even though the youngest will find it hard.

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Having done the activity a second time, return to reflecting on the psalm. In the Psalm, it says that God is a shepherd who leads us into good places. He knows what is best for us and will only do good to us. God will not hurt, punish or harm you – he will protect, lead and help you.

Ask for a final volunteer.

After having done the activity a final time, move onto one last reflection: However, things can be hard, like using chop sticks for the first time. Some things can be very painful in life. And God understands this. The psalm says that even in the *darkest valley*, that means the very worst times of our lives, God will be with us. He does not make these bad things happen, but he will lead us through them and out from them because he loves us. He will never, ever leave us, and will always guide us, because he loves us. We can trust him because he is our Good Shepherd, and he knows us and loves us perfectly.

Reflection:

Read and words

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

Ask pupils to close their eyes and listen to the words again. Ask them to imagine God with them, wherever they are. Ask them to imagine him standing close, protecting them, and guiding them, in control. And then ask them to imagine him saying these words to them: *I will never leave you, no matter what.*

Response:

Pupils close their eyes and hold in their heads something that they need help with at present. Allow God to come and take that from them, because he will help lead them through whatever it is.

Closing prayer: Loving God, we thank you that you are our Good Shepherd. We thank you that you never change, you are always good, and that you never leave us. We pray that you help us to trust you in our lives, to know that you love and treasure us, and to look to you when we feel lost. Amen

Recommended songs:

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O When the Saints Go Marching in (linked to the idea that life is a journey)
Be Bold, Be Strong (linked to the idea that we can be bold in times that are difficult because we know that God walks with us)

4. Rambling On (if you want to talk a lot)



Time: 20-25 minutes

Resources:

- Psalm 23 PPT which is on the USB stick
(it also can easily be shown on screen via Bible Gateway:
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+23&version=GNT>)
- PDF with pictures of Minty the sheep around the world which is on the USB stick

Welcome and opening

Brief liturgy to begin: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you [seek response of *and also with you*]

Main body

Show the video explaining the project. This is on the USB stick provided. Read psalm 23. Have it up on the screen. See resources attached for this.

If time permits, read it again.

Use the PDF pictures (see USB stick) to ask the pupils if they can identify where Minty the sheep is in each picture. Answers are: Grand Canyon, Great Wall of China, Eiffel Tower, London (Westminster to be exact!), Rome, Mt Everest (x2).

Ask the pupils if they have ever met a shepherd. It is unlikely that they have. Can they tell you what the job of a shepherd is? Ideally hope to elicit that a shepherd guides, leads and protects sheep.

And why do sheep need a shepherd. Because they cannot fully guide, lead or help themselves.

Let's look again at the psalm. Let's look at what God says he does for his people.

*He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.*

God says that he is in control. Do you notice that it says that he leads us to quiet waters – that means into peace and rest? Do you see that it says that he makes us lie down in green pastures? That means he knows what is best for us and leads us to it.

And best of all, it says that God refreshes our soul. When we feel tired, worn out, scared, worried or stressed, God tells us that he is the one who restores us. He makes us new again. He alone has that power.

Let's look at one more verse.

He guides me along the right paths

for his name's sake.

Even though I walk

through the darkest valley,

I will fear no evil,

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff,

they comfort me.

God says that he knows the way we need to go. He says that he will lead us in the right paths. Do you ever feel confused about what to do? Do you ever think you need help or feel a bit lost? God knows that we all do sometimes, and he promises to be the guide to keep us on the right track. But he does not promise that things will always be easy, simple or nice. He knows that life is sometimes tricky, confusing and hard. Sometimes things happen that hurt us. God doesn't tell us that these will never happen. But he does promise to always – always – be with us in these troubling times. He promises to lead us even when things are hard, especially when things are hard, no matter what is happening or how bad it is.

Reflection and response:

Read the last few verse of the psalm:

Surely your goodness and love will follow me

all the days of my life,

and I will dwell in the house of the LORD

forever.

Not only does God promise to lead us, but he tells us that wherever we go, even if we are not following him, his love will follow us. You see, God loves you so much that even if you choose to run from him, he will follow you and always be there to help you. So please close your eyes. I would like you to imagine God sitting near you, and smiling gently and kindly at you. I would like you to imagine him holding out his hand to you, to offer to be with you. And you can choose to take it or leave it. And I want you to imagine that whatever your response, God is still smiling kindly at you.

Closing prayer: Loving God, we thank you that you are our Good Shepherd. We thank you that you never change, you are always good, and that you never leave us. We pray that you help us to trust you in our lives, to know that you love and treasure us, and to look to you when we feel lost. Amen

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