



'Worship at home' April 30th 2023



As we continue in the season
of Easter, **light a candle**
as a reminder that we continue
to experience the presence of the risen Christ,
with us always.

Opening

In the darkest valley,
at the banquet table;
in the hard work of life,
at the moments of ease;
in our day-to-day reality,
at times set aside—
like this time, now—
for worship, for listening, for paying attention;
with every step we take:
goodness and mercy follow us;
our cups overflow.



~ Joanna Harader

<https://spaciousfaith.com/>



We continue to consider the many ways in which we experience the presence of the risen Christ in our lives. This Sunday is sometimes referred to in the Church's liturgical year as Good Shepherd Sunday, and we reflect on images of Jesus as shepherd: images of generous and abundant care, nurture and provision.

Psalm 23

*The Lord is my shepherd; I
have everything I need. He
lets me rest in fields of green
grass and leads me to quiet*

*pools of fresh water. He gives
me new strength. He guides
me in the right paths, as he
has promised.*

Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff protect me. You prepare a banquet for me, where all my enemies can

see me; you welcome me as an honoured guest and fill my cup to the brim. I know that your goodness and love will be with me all my life; and your house will be my home as long as I live..

Good News Bible



Reflect on the images of abundance you find in this scripture.

Give thanks for ways in which you have experienced God's generous care and provision this week.

John 10:1-10

Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who goes in through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out. When he has brought them out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. They will not follow someone else; instead, they will run away from such

a person, because they do not know his voice." Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he meant. So Jesus said again, "I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep. All others who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness.

Good News Bible



In this Scripture passage, Jesus says that he has come so that his sheep - his followers, all of us - may have “life in all its fullness” – generous and abundant life. The image is not simply existing, as we go about the tasks and rituals of each day, but of having a deep sense of wellbeing and flourishing. Generous and abundant life gives meaning, purpose

and fulfillment; generous and abundant life is not about abundance of food or possessions or things we want; rather, it is found in God’s overflowing love and grace, filling us with goodness and mercy, and generously flowing out to those around us. It is then that we, as individuals and as communities, flourish and find fulfillment.

What brings meaning, purpose and fulfillment to your life?

How might this overflow into all aspects of your life, and flow out to those around you?

Love only grows by sharing. You can only have more for yourself by giving it away to others.

BRIAN TRACY

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God, in whom we find shepherding love, may we hear, follow and embody this love in all the days and in all the ways of our lives. May words and deeds joyfully testify to the abundance of your faithful love for us and for all. Amen.

Seasons of the Spirit™

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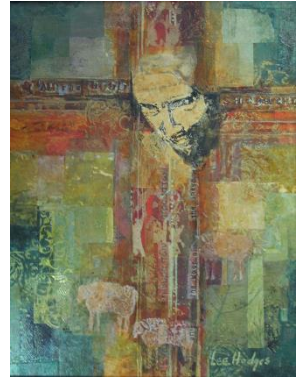
The good news of Easter is that of the risen Christ, the good shepherd who keeps us safe, and in whom we are known and loved. The generous and abundant life he offers is not something we can earn or achieve or buy. Rather, it is a gift of God who loves us enough to lay down his life, that we might have cups full “to the brim” and “life in all its fullness”.



<http://www.http://www.cruzblanca.org/hermanoleon/>

Prayer

Merciful God,
who is more than we can ever imagine,
give us a wider vision of the world;
give us a broader view of justice;
give us dreams of peace
that are not defined by boundaries
of geography or race or religion,
or by the limitations of worldly structures
and systems.



Open our eyes and our ears
that wherever we go,
we may hear your voice calling us by name;
calling us to serve,
calling us to share,
calling us to praise,
so that we never give up on the promise of your kingdom,
where the world is transformed,
and all can enjoy generous and abundant life. Amen.

~ adapted from <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

Closing

Go in peace to show love and care for others
and may God lead you
to places of rest and renewal;
may Christ Jesus give you
life in abundance;
and may the Holy Spirit fill your heart
with gladness and generosity,
both now
and forevermore.

Amen.

- adapted from Richard Fairchild
[Kir-Shalom](http://www.kirshalom.org/)

