

The cost of care

John 10.11-18 Easter 4

The image of Jesus as good shepherd draws on the imagery of Psalm 23 and elsewhere and is a familiar symbol for God/Jesus used in both the Old and New Testaments. Here Jesus makes a contrast between the shepherd and a hired hand, and the ways in which they care for the sheep. He clearly designates himself as the good shepherd, making it no longer a symbol but an opportunity for a relationship as he knows his sheep by name.

This week we explore 'good shepherd' as a model for community.

Prepare your young people's session

Read Bible notes on [WEB](#).

Spend some time reflecting on why the shepherd in John 10 is good, and consider in what ways he can be used as a role model.

It is important to explore what communities the young people feel part of, and where the leadership of those communities comes from. Finding modern-day examples of care in leadership may be helpful for them to have a clearer understanding of what Jesus means by calling himself the good shepherd.

Find more ideas opposite. Go to www.rootsontheweb.com for links, templates, images, tracks.

GATHER

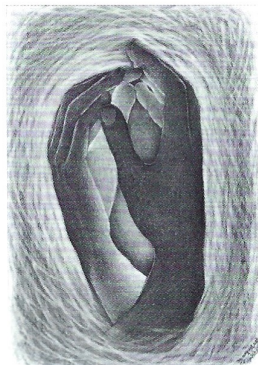
Names 5 mins WE

You will need: pens and paper.

- Invite the young people to make two lists: one of people who know them by name and one of people whose name they know.
- Play the track 'You Say', Lauren Daigle on *Look Up Child*, during this activity.
- Compare the lists: Why are some people on one list and not on others? How does it feel for people to know your name or to know someone else's name?

First impressions [WEB](#)

You could also use the image and following questions to help introduce the theme.



- What do you see in this image?
- What does 'a caring community' mean to you?
- What are the personal costs of being a caring community?

SHARE THE WORD

RCL Easter 4 Year B: Acts 4.5-12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3.16-24; John 10.11-18.

Read and react 5 mins WE

- Read **John 10.11-18** from *The Message* (see biblegateway.com). As you read, ask the young people to cheer for what is good and boo for what is bad.
- Afterwards, talk together about why they booed and why they cheered.

EXPLORE AND RESPOND

Memory game 5 mins WE

Illustrate the demands of remembering

You will need: 25-30 pictures of famous people the young people will know.

- Lay out the pictures and ask the group to look at them.
- Ask one young person to turn away and invite another to remove one picture and reorder the others. The person who turned away should try to identify who is missing.
- Once everyone who wants to take part has had a turn, talk about how easy it was to remember people, and about how God remembers each of us and knows us by name.

Pompom sheep 10 mins ES

Make sheep that are all different

You will need: cardboard rings, wool, scissors, black card, glue, googly eyes, instruction video (on [WEB](#)).

- Make pompom sheep by winding wool round cardboard rings then stick googly eyes on them – follow the detailed instructions in the video.
- Talk about how although they all seem to be alike, there are always some differences.

Shepherd and sheep prayers 5 mins ES

Bring prayers to Jesus, the good shepherd

You will need: picture of the good shepherd on a large piece of paper with plenty of space around it, sheep templates (on [WEB](#)), pens, scissors, glue.

- Prepare a large picture of the good shepherd with plenty of space around it.
- Play 'Shepherd', Amanda Cook, Bethel Music on *You Make Me Brave*, during this activity.
- Give out the sheep shapes. Invite the group to write prayer topics or names of people they wish to pray for on the sheep, and glue them around the shepherd.
- Conclude with a simple prayer, bringing all your prayers together.

[WEB](#) *Check-in:* Connecting faith with everyday, real-life issues.

GO WITH GOD

Consider together what you have explored, what that means for each of you and how it might influence your daily lives.

- Invite the young people to write a job advert and job description for a good shepherd, considering the cost of care. Encourage them to talk about what qualities they think are needed.
- Ask: What ways could you attract people to apply for the role? How can you emphasise how costly this role can be? What would encourage you to apply for the role?

Go with God 24/7

Research contemporary shepherds. See what you can discover about the demands they face, and how they look after their sheep. How does that make you feel about Jesus as the good shepherd? **EA**

As you finish, give out the **ROOTS at home** resource [WEB](#), to encourage faith at home.