



Love of Christ Lutheran Church

1525 North Power Road
Mesa AZ 85205

Fax: (480) 832-2583
Office: (480) 981-6199

Welcome to LOC's Weekly E-News

Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 26, 2026



"The Sheep Hear His Voice"

Leading up to Easter we encountered one of John's amazing signs of a man born blind being given the ability to see when he responds to the voice of Jesus (9:7). Then another sign follows when Lazarus is raised from the dead (11:43-44). Jesus calls for him to come out of the tomb, and the power of death is defeated by the life force of Jesus. Then on Easter Sunday we listened to John's account of Mary Magdalene lost in grief and bewildered by the empty tomb. Weeping, she too hears her name being called (20:16), and, like Lazarus, she realizes the power of death is defeated by the life force of Jesus. In our gospel for today it is sheep, symbolic of God's people, who can discern the voice of the good shepherd as opposed to the thieves and bandits who are only out for themselves. Jesus tells us, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."



Giving and Multiplying

What we hold on to always diminishes. What we give away always multiplies. It is the great illogic. The poor will possess the land.

Those who give away what they have will see it multiply. Those who hold on to it in fear will see it dwindle right in front of them.... Our response to the call to follow Jesus can be very concrete. Our response is to take small steps away from "me" and "my fears" toward the Lord. (Following Jesus: Finding Our Way Home in an Age of Anxiety)

Reflection Question: What fears or attachments make it difficult for me to trust that giving can lead to abundance?



Theologian and podcaster Kate Bowler frames Easter as a feast of joy that doesn't erase the pain that has come before it:

Easter is the season of joy. The alleluias return. The story reaches its turning point. Death does not get the last word. Easter is that gorgeous, sweet, closing note of the salvation hymn we believe with all our hearts: Christ has conquered death, and we will someday be with God forever. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Joy brings us incredible, brief, soul-filling moments when we feel the overwhelming love of God and our place in this world. Our soul cries: Yes. I am grateful. It is so good to be alive. Joy is a gift from God and a feeling that bubbles up from wherever the soul lives (probably close to the intestines. This is my working theory after realizing I will never love anything as much as I love Old Dutch Ketchup Potato Chips).

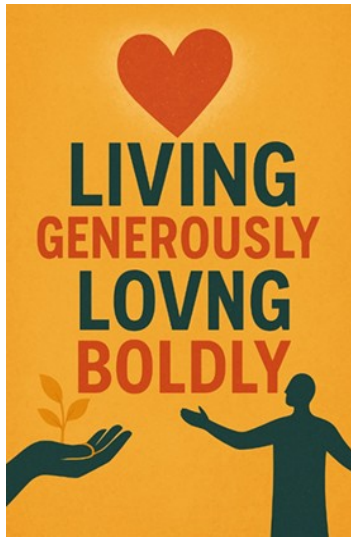
But that is not the only way joy shows up. There is an aspect of joy we often miss around Easter, and it appears precisely when Easter comes and goes and life remains ... unfinished. We wake up the next morning and discover that we are still carrying the same griefs, the same unanswered prayers, the same ache we carried throughout Lent. This can feel confusing. Shouldn't we feel better? Was Easter not enough?

But Easter joy is not the feeling that everything has been fixed. It is not happiness, resolution, or emotional closure. Easter joy is the ability to live in Christian anticipation and trust—patiently and imperfectly—even while we remain here in the long middle.

Joy is one of the most powerful experiences we can have because it is an emotion that can co-exist with our actual lives. **Unlike happiness, joy can live alongside sadness, boredom, fear, or despair.** It expands our capacity to hold contradictory truths at the same time—and because we know joy, we recover a strange, steady confidence that life is still worth loving, even when it hurts.

Scripture is honest about this. Jesus weeps at Lazarus tomb, even knowing resurrection is coming. Paul speaks of being “sorrowful, yet always rejoicing” [2 Corinthians 6:10]. Revelation [21:4] promises a future where God will wipe away every tear—but that promise is not the same thing as pretending we are not crying now.

This is where Easter joy lives. It is not joy instead of grief. It is joy with grief. Not joy that rushes us forward, but joy that allows us to remain human in the meantime.... This joy is more totalizing than optimism. It is truer than plain happiness. It is the deep assurance that the story is not finished, even when our lives feel painfully incomplete. Easter joy is the grace of being able to say: This is hard. I am still waiting. And God is still good. Not because everything has changed—but because, one day—poof—God promises everything will.



40 Years > \$40,000 Mission Outreach Challenge

At our anniversary celebration on April 12, we officially announced our goal over the next 8 months to raise \$20,000 to match what the Board had previously set aside to serve as a mission outreach gift to sister ELCA ministries in our Rio Salado Conference.

Since the initial \$20,000 gift, our Endowment Committee has added a gift of \$2,000, and our LoC Preschool is looking to make a \$3600 gift to the 40th Anniversary Mission Fund. Joining these gifts are the designation of \$2,000 from the Pastor Don Thompson Legacy Fund.

San Tan Valley-Crossroads Lutheran is reaching out in the fast-growing SE corner of the metro area and First Place, an outreach of First Evangelical Lutheran in Mesa is committed to serving the Latino majority neighbors of their historic neighborhood of Mesa. They are our mission partners we hope to support with our mission challenge gift. If you want to support this effort, you can do it online using the 40th Anniversary donor line, or mark checks or envelopes with 40th Anniversary. With \$27,600 already toward our goal, can we reach \$40,000 by December 31, 2026? By living generously and loving boldly we can!



Adult Study this Wednesday at 6PM in the Fellowship Hall.

We will be looking at several examples of how God used ordinary people to be tremendous agents of healing and change in a time of great fracture, division, and suffering. This week we look at Ella Baker, a leading Civil Rights leader along with others who practiced non-violence in the face of brutal hate.



Handbell Ringers Needed

Do you read music and count beats? We would love to have you join our Handbell Choir! We are looking for ringers for monthly Sunday performances.

Rehearsals are held **Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in the Greenroom**. If you're interested, please let me know—we'd love to ring with you! You can contact me at jungmusic@loclc.org

We can't wait to celebrate this wonderful season of music, fellowship, and joy with all of you.

Music Notes....

With gratitude and excitement,
Jung Lee



Calling All Bakers

Cookie Ministry is looking for people who like to bake. The Cookie Ministry is part of the Faith in Action programs at Love of Christ. This ministry makes cookies for our various events that are held here on our campus and beyond our campus. If you are interested in baking cookies for this ministry, please contact Eunice Ketterling at ketts4az@gmail.com



Community Garden News

The community garden is starting to wind down for the summer off-season.

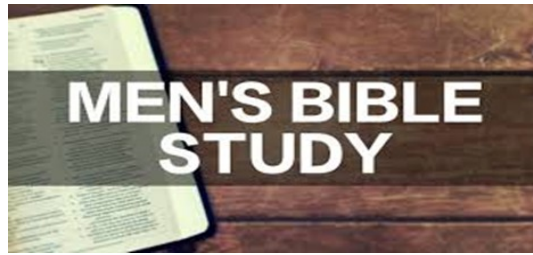
There have been enough cherry tomatoes to harvest and share. The weeds were never a problem and the automatic watering system makes it easy.

Think about trying out a garden in the fall. We are all learning new things and getting to know new people in the fresh air.

Contact Nancy. Dntoll74@gmail.com



Naomi Circle will meet on May 11th, at 1PM in the Fellowship Hall. All women are welcome—invite your friends!

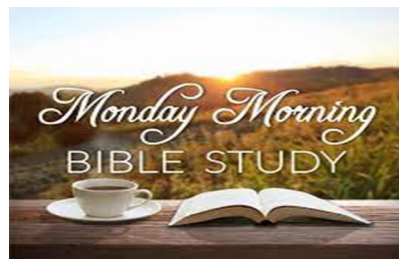


Monday Men's Bible Study on 1st Corinthians at 6:30-7:30AM in the Leadership Room.

Men of all ages are welcome to participate.



Online Video introductions provided by our pastors of Sunday Lectionary readings are offered each week. They may be found on Facebook, YouTube or loveofchristchurch.net



Monday Morning Bible Study in the Leadership Room.

Coffee Fellowship at 10:30, Bible Study at 11AM

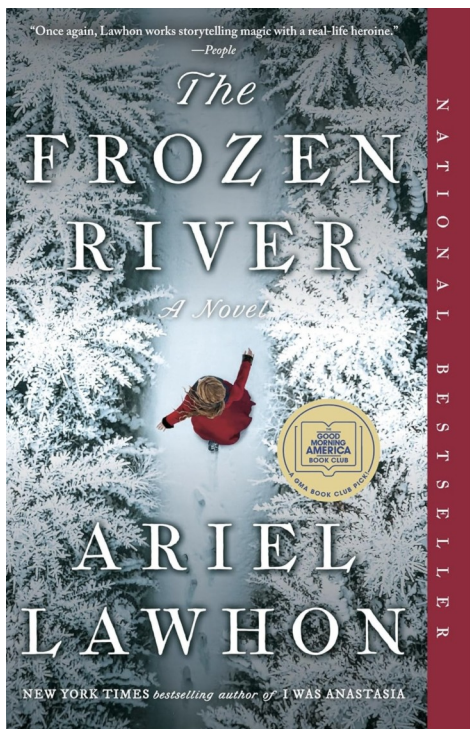


Prayer Share Care Women's Bible Study

All women are invited to a weekly Bible study group called Prayer Share Care. ***This group meets on Thursday afternoons at 1:00 in the Leadership Room.*** Please contact Ruth Leonard or Margrit Aeschbach at the following emails for more information. (Margrit: mswiss43@gmail.com and Ruth: ruthleonard@icloud.com)

The LOC Book Club will be meeting on May 17th to talk about, The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon. This book won the award in 2025 for best in historical fiction. We look forward to seeing you in May.

To help you get started, here is a short synopsis of the book:



Maine, 1789: When the Kennebec River freezes, entombing a man in the ice, Martha Ballard is summoned to examine the body and determine cause of death. As a midwife and healer, she is privy to much of what goes on behind closed doors in Hallowell. Her diary is a record of every birth and death, crime and debacle that unfolds in the close-knit community. Months earlier, Martha documented the details of an alleged rape committed by two of the town's most respected gentlemen—one of whom has now been found dead in the ice. But when a local physician undermines her conclusion, declaring the death to be an accident, Martha is forced to investigate the shocking murder on her own.

Over the course of one winter, as the trial nears, and whispers and prejudices mount, Martha doggedly pursues the truth. Her diary soon lands at the center of the scandal, implicating those she loves, and compelling Martha to decide where her own loyalties lie.

Clever, layered, and subversive, Ariel Lawhon's newest offering introduces an unsung heroine who refused to accept anything less than justice at a time when women were considered best seen and

not heard. *The Frozen River* is a thrilling, tense, and tender story about a remarkable woman who left an unparalleled legacy yet remains nearly forgotten to this day.

Baby Shower

Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest hosts a baby shower each Mother's Day for their clients. They are in need of baby items for about 80 mothers. You can participate in this drive by purchasing needed items from Amazon and having them delivered directly to LSS-SW. Follow this link to make a gift:

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/37KGGTWYMD24A?ref=wl_share

Questions? Contact Elizabeth Danielson @ ekdanielson@gmail.com



On **May 9th**, the LOC Women's Hiking Group will be traveling to **Flagstaff** and visiting **Walnut Canyon Nat. Monument**. The paved Island Trail has more than 700 steps that lead 1 mile in and out of the lush natural area. Back up top, the Rim Trail (3/4 mile) is a flat, paved walkway that features spectacular overlooks of the canyon plus a partially rebuilt pueblo and pit house. Will meet at 7:00 am. for a day of adventure. Contact: Pat Shaw at 480 334-9123 (call or text).



Youth and Confirmation will be on Wednesday, April 22nd at 5:30 for dinner and 6:00 for Confirmation

Contact Mason Weatherly for more info at masonw@loclc.org



Confirmation

Confirmation will be held on Wednesday nights from 6PM to 7PM in the room 48.

Next Confirmation class will be held on Wednesday, April 22nd.

Any questions, please contact Pastor Nanette at nanette@loclc.org

Spring/Summer Overview for 2026 Save the Dates:

May 3: Children's Musical at 9:00

May Family Promise 5/10-17. We will need meals, overnights, and hosts.

June 11,12,13: Synod Assembly at LoC

June 15-19 Music Camp ages 5 and up

July 6-10 VBS

About Family Promise

In Operation since 2000, Family Promise – Greater Phoenix has provided more than just shelter for families. For the past 19 years, the programs at Family Promise have helped more than 500 families. These programs have enabled families to move from homelessness to self-sufficiency.

The Family Promise Mission is providing emergency shelter and social services to help families move toward independent housing and self-sufficiency.

Vision: The Vision of Family Promise is a community of whole and healthy families.

At Family Promise, we give families the tools and training to care for their children, find employment and housing, and become independent and successful. We strive to provide a safety net for children and their families before they drop into a cycle of endless shelters, loss of school attendance, unemployment, family instability and foster care.

Family Promise provides basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter, but we also provide a safe, encouraging, and constructive environment for families that feel lost and scared. Family Promise's long-term goal is to break the cycle of homelessness and create a sense of community for the families that participate in the program, and the thousands of volunteers that have contributed to this program over the years.

Congregations

Congregations are at the heart of our work. More than two dozen congregations provide temporary shelter, meals, activities, and compassion to our families. Up to four families are housed on the campus of each congregation for a week at a time, providing a safe, accepting environment. Each morning, a Family Promise van brings family members to the Family Center, where the children may depart for school, some adults may head to work, and others continue their job search. Each evening, the families return to the congregation for dinner, activities, and an overnight stay in their own room or area.

“A chance for volunteers at congregations to live their faith. It's a wonderful mission outreach program that takes place right in the safe environment of your congregation.”



Our Sunday School Ministry for ages 4-2nd grade Sunday School is from 9:10-9:50. Children are to come to church with their parents and are dismissed for Sunday School after the Children's Message. They return to worship during Communion. For grades 3-6 Sunday school begins at 9:50 and they are done at 10:20. Sunday School takes place in the Godly Play room. For any questions, please contact Pastor Nanette at nanette@loclc.org.

Faith Food and Fun (Grades 4,5, and 6)



Grades 4,5, and 6 will meet in the CoC **on Sunday, May 17 at 3:30 pm.** Please contact Laura Ontiveros or Pastor Nanette for more information.

WOW! Word on Wednesdays

Word on Wednesdays is on Wed. April 22nd with Children's Musical, Adult Bible Study, and Confirmation/Youth Group. Beginning at 5:30, there is a light meal with everything else starting at 6:00 pm.

Children's Musical—The FAB 4 Kids Show—Rockin' the Gospels All the Way to the Cross!

Rehearsals are on Wednesdays from 6pm to 7:30pm in Room 50

Performance: Sunday, May 3rd at 9AM

KIDS Summer MUSIC CAMP



JUNE
15-19



**SPECIAL
OFFER**

\$300
Enroll multiple kids
save \$50!
Sign up Online!

Musical "The Kingdom
Connection",
Art, Dance & Sports

Grades K-8 welcome!



For More information, contact Ms. Jung
junglee@maestromasterclasses.com

Love of Christ Lutheran Church
1525 N. Power Rd. Mesa, 85205

🌸 MomCo at Love of Christ Lutheran Church! 🌸

Calling all moms! Whether you're in the thick of toddlerhood, navigating teenage years, or somewhere in between — you're not alone.



We're excited to announce that our church will now be hosting MomCo, a community designed for moms, by moms. MomCo is a place where women gather in circles of support, friendship, and faith — because raising humans is both beautiful and hard, and no one should have to do it alone:

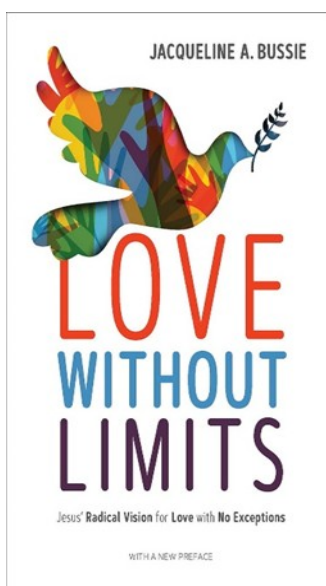
- Build meaningful, lasting friendships
- Encourage and equip moms to lead with love
- Grow the church by nurturing families in faith
- Bring mothers and their families closer to Jesus

Join Us! Location: Love of Christ

📅 When: **Next meeting May 6th**, first Wednesday of the month from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM in Godly Playroom located in entrance to Center of Compassion.

📞 Contact: Kacey Weir or Pastor Nanette Christofferson 🌐

Online Options: - <http://www.themom.co/groups/loveofchristmesa>, - www.themom.co/join (use Code: M1WH)



Love Without Limits will meet on Wednesday, May 6th at 4:30 in the Fellowship Hall.

In her book, Jacqueline Bussie says nothing is more scandalous than a “love without limits.” How does a love without limits mirror Jesus and the God we are called to serve? How does this echo Jesus’ ministry in Luke 15 (the parables of being lost) or Paul’s proclamation in Galatians 3:28 (There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one Christ Jesus)? This study is open to all women who are interested in learning about our God who loves without limits! They will be discussing Chapter 8.

Refugee Family Co-Sponsorship with Lutheran Social Services:

Our Co-Sponsorship Team has been helping a refugee family from Syria. The help that is needed is working with the adults who are learning English. This team is making wonderful progress and forming some beautiful relationships with the family as well. We have provided back to school clothing and backpacks for each of the four children, along with teaching them English. If you are interested in learning more or think you might like to join this team, please contact Chris Norden at norden6162@gmail.com



Young Adults are typically between the ages of 18 and 30-5 ish! We are fortunate to have these Young Adults interested in gathering and learning together. Our next meeting will be **on Sunday, April 26th** at 12:15 at Got Sushi on N. Power Rd and McDowell, where we will discuss Buddhism and Confucianism. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Nanette or Laura Ontiveros.

Kairos Request for Supplies

Donations Needed – Please Share!

We would LOVE your help spreading the word! If you have friends or church groups who would like to bless this weekend, here are the sign-up links:

- Food Donations for the Weekend: [HERE](#)
- Community Room Snack Items: [HERE](#)
- Agape Items for Friday Comfort Bags: [HERE](#)

Please have your donations in by Thursday, April 23rd. Call Karen Reinhart at 815-383-1744 or email at mathnut59@gmail.com for more information.

As always your prayers for the weekend are appreciated. We will also have a couple of opportunities to support our guests in their Kairos Outside Journey.

You are Invited to Be Part of the Weekend!

Your friends, family, and church communities are invited to join us for two beautiful moments:

- **Walk in Love** – Saturday, April 25th at 8:00 PM
(We will have signs in the parking lot directing you to the Dining Room)
- **Closing Service** – Sunday, April 26th at 1:45 PM in the Sanctuary

Phoenix Christian Schools

1751 W. Indian School Road

Phoenix, AZ 85015

BLANKETS FOR KIDS!!!



Questions? Contact Jan Barnett at: barnett105@gmail.com

- 2 Methods of finishing the edges of the blankets
- Sewing around the edges
- Crocheting around the edges
- Both methods start the same

Lay Fabric on a table, trim off the Salvage edges of the fleece;

- Sewing around the edges

Fold $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch around the edge ;

Pin the folded edges all around the edge;

Choose a decorative stitch on sewing machine and start sewing

If your machine only does Zig Zag, that is great also.

- Optional--Baste $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of fold around the edge of the fleece with a needle and thread (Optional)

OR

- Just fold the fabric over about $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch and cut very small slits in the fold;
- Slits should be no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch in length and around $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch from the each other
- If you basted around the edges

Remove the basting from the fleece

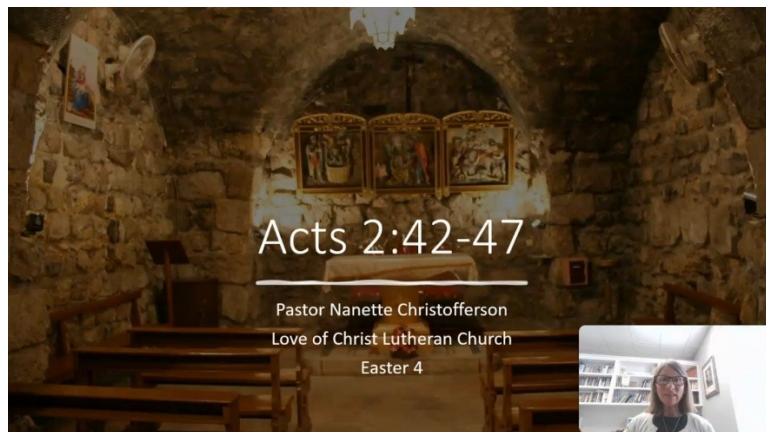
- If you have a rotary cutter, you can purchase wheels that will cut the slits in the fleece material the same distance and the slit created is large enough to slip the crochet hook through. Then follow the remaining directions.
- If you just folded and cut the slits;

Start crocheting around the edge. (I start 6 or 7 inches from the corner of the fleece to make turning the first corner easier.)

1. Start by creating a slipknot.
2. Insert the crochet hook through a slit in the fleece and pull the loop of the slip knot through;
3. Chain 3 times (create a chain by yarning over the hook and pulling it back through the initial loop.); chain only 2 times if you have used the rotary cutter;
4. Push the crochet hook through the slit next to the one just used (back to front) and pull a loop back through the slit. (You will have 2 loops on the crochet hook.)
5. With the 2 loops still on the hook, yarn over the hook and pull through both loops. Now chain 2 more times.
6. Proceed around the fleece using steps 4 and 5.
7. To turn a corner, follow steps 4 and 5, but insert the hook again in the same slit and do 1 chain and then insert the hook again and perform steps 4 and 5, Then you should be on a new side of the blanket and proceed following steps 4 and 5

There is an additional set of slides which have instructions on how to start crocheting. If you do not need those instructions, ignore.

Scripture Lesson
A Brief Look at Acts 2:42-47
with Pastor Nanette Christofferson
(14 min)

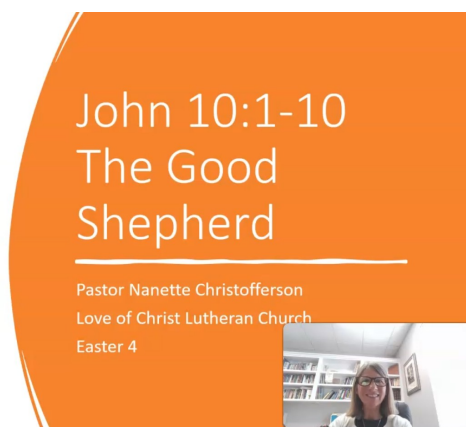


YouTube: <https://youtu.be/UZq9Kj5dPRo>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/reel/2048163462796681/>

Website: <https://www.loveofchristchurch.net/media/series/7vjwfnk/bible-lessons>

Scripture Lesson
A Brief Look at John 10:1-10
With Pastor Nanette Christofferson
(14 min)



YouTube: <https://youtu.be/0BlrC0PKZ4c>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/reel/1273794174310834/>

Website: <https://www.loveofchristchurch.net/media/series/7vjwfnk/bible-lessons>

Sunday, April 26, 2026, 7:50 am, 9 and 10:30,

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&



Pastor Nanette Christofferson “The Sheep Hear His Voice ”

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 through 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.

1 Peter 2:19-25

For it is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

John 10:1-10

Jesus the Good Shepherd

“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.