

INTO THE FOLD

July 2019

visit our website at www.umcrp.org

Ponderings by Pastor JoEllyn....

While attending our 2019 Indiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church (June 12-15, 2019), I was gifted with meeting and greeting friends that have moved out of our vicinity. I was able to share a few moments with Steve and Pam Laue, along with hugs and a few snap shots.



Steven James Laue has officially retired as of July 1, 2019. He shared his story in this year's program, may I share it with all who have known and shared his life.



Toward the end of my career as a hospital chaplain, the CEO of our healthcare system invited department managers to compose personal mission statements. Reflecting on my 13 years at LaPorte Hospital, I came up with "to listen to, to tell and to participate in healing stories." I find these directives still relevant today and equally worthy of encompassing the whole of my ministry.

My life and ministry chronology: I was born in Madison, Wisconsin. My family moved to Indiana when I was 2. I was baptized by Rev. Herb Wingard, and my family church was Rolling Prairie UMC. I graduated from

New Prairie High School in Rolling Prairie, Indiana.

Ministers that influenced my high school and college years include Ken Mahan, Rick Pickering, and Joe Andrews.

I earned a BA degree in Biology from Wabash College, anticipating my profession at the time to be a researcher in botany or forestry. My calling to ministry came when I was beginning a master's degree program in Forestry at Purdue University, where I became involved in the Wesley Foundation and met Rev. John VanVactor, who became a close friend and valued mentor. John was the first person to invite me to consider the ministry. This was a turning point in my life. In 1983, I graduated from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and was ordained as a Deacon the same year. 1983-1984: York House UMC in Waukegan, Illinois (Northern Illinois Conference) trip to the Holy Land 1984-1986: South Huntington County Parish (Associate, Senior Pastor Chip Gast); met and married Pamela McNeal

1986-1989: Royal Center Trinity and White Oak UMC; first son, Ian, born; Mexican retreat with MFSA members 1989-1991: South Bend First UMC (Associate, Senior Pastor Alan Byrne); second son, Sean, Born

1991-1995: Anderson Fifth Street UMC (started Kids Club); leave of absence (Planned Parenthood Dad-to-Dad program); visit to Bosnia UMCOR project; attended New Horizons UMC in Anderson (Rev. Steve Ailes and Rev. Steve Holdzkom)

1997-1998: Chaplain residency (CPE) at I.U. Methodist/Riley Hospital in Indianapolis

1999-2013: Director of Spiritual Care Services, LaPorte Hospital (extension ministry); attended LaPorte First UMC (Rev. Doug Hadley, Rev. Evan Lash)

2006: Diagnosed with Parkinson's disease

2013: Disability leave began

2016: Moved to Sun City West, Arizona to be near son and family; attend Spirit Song UMC in Peoria, Arizona (Rev. Valerie Fairchild); assist with small groups and prayer stations following Communion

2019: Officially retire from the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church

As a hospital chaplain, my first obligation was to listen; as a parish pastor, one of my directives was to tell the story of Jesus; and now as a person with Parkinson's, I find myself participating in the healing story of my own journey with God.



All clergy need your prayers, retirement doesn't change that need. I ask you to also pray for those God has appointed to new positions and those who are continuing in their current appointments.

This year, our Annual Conference theme was *From Water to Witness*, which highlights our goal of being fully missional, both in the state of Indiana and throughout the greater Connection. It is based on Ephesians

4: 4-5:

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”

Praying you through,
Pastor JoEllyn

Bette’s Pen:

Since Fair starts next Sunday, I thought to give a brief history of the beginning of our Fair Food Booth. Information obtained are from two publications compiled by Marcia Porter, History of Rolling Prairie United Methodist Church 1986 & 1996, and talking with Iva and Deb Harris. Please forgive any information that may be incorrect as the passage of time have faded into foggy memories from so long ago.. Iva believes fair possibly began late 60’s, 1968 or 69. According to the red cover History of RPUMC, in 1978 congregation voted to sponsor a food booth. Those first few years, the menu was just sandwiches, possibly hot dogs, sold out of a tent, with bare ground as the floor. No tables or chairs, just grab, pay & go. Wood Planks were placed behind the counter as a floor for the fair workers, tables & chairs were set up for the customers to rest a spell while enjoying their purchased food fare. In those beginning years, everything, stoves, refrigerators, grills, tables, chairs would have been hauled out to fairgrounds from various church members garages & barns. For the price of breakfast & lunch, work release from the prison, would haul all that stuff out to fairgrounds & back to the storage buildings of the members. Eventually a bigger tent, put up by Lafayette Tent Rental, would be used. Members of the church, at least two at a time, taking turns, would spend

the night guarding the tent & equipment, all week.. In 1997 a concrete pad was poured to replace the wood & dirt floor.. A few years after that the building was built. Life just got easier, no more loading, unloading, hauling of equipment. In 2010, the kitchen addition was built..

The menu went from just a few sandwich choices, to include breakfast items, french fries, onion rings and now include full meals, like Pork Tenderloin dinners, Chicken & Noodles, Meat Loaf & of course our homemade pies made by the ladies of the church.

Art & Iva Wasielewski & Ken & Ella Porter were co-chairs until 2006 when Deb Harris & Scott Lenig took over as Co-Chairs of the Church Fair Food Building and continue today in that role.

Without the Dedicated members & friends of the RPUMC, who volunteer to get the building ready & cleaned up, shop for all the needed groceries, food donations, fill the various work positions needed throughout the Fair Week, & more, the success of our “Food Eatery” would not be.. Thank You!

See you at the Fair!!

Blessings & Peace be yours, *Bette*

Anyone have fair recollections locked away that you would like to share? let me know... Pictures?

EVENTS & MEETINGS 2019

Food Prep at the Fair Building –

Fri & Sat, July 5 & 6 @ 8 a.m.

LP County Fair

Church Food Booth July 7- 13

FAIR WEEK - Office will be open

9- Noon, , M-W-Th

Closed Tuesday

UMW MEETING

Tuesday July 16, 9:30 a.m

Board/Council Meeting

Tuesday July 16, 6:30 p.m.

BEST YEARS –

Wednesday, July 17, Noon,
Blacksmith Shoppe

Vacation Bible School

Monday July 29 & Tuesday July 30...
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

If would like to help during VBS
please let Karen Fitzgerald know...

MOSEY ON OVER TO



For Two Days of Frontier Fun

The Kid’s will kick up their heels at Yee-Haw VBS, as they stampede through the wild frontier.

Kids will go on a frontier adventure where they’ll discover that God gives good gifts! This VBS is filled with incredible Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, and touch. Team-building games, cool Bible songs, and multisensory Bible adventures are just a few of the activities that help faith flow into real life. (Since everything is hands-on, kids might get a little messy. Be sure to send them in play clothes and sturdy shoes.)

For
added
fun
send
them in



their cowboy gear.

Boots, Hats, gloves, etc.

Sign up your Children and let them invite their friends to come as we will be “Celebrating God’s Greatest Gift”

Registration Forms will be available
at the Church Office.

See Pastor JoEllyn, Bette, or Karen to
get forms..

Another Euchre Night

UMW sponsored

Saturday Sept 21 5 – 9 p.m

No Silent Auction... Just a fun time
to play cards, laugh, chat.

Come for sandwich 5 – 6 pm..

Cards at 6.. Details later...



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

We have a few more chapters in the
study 3:16 THE NUMBERS OF HOPE
by Max Lucado....

Digging deeper into the meaning of
these 26 words.

Believers and seekers alike have
flocked to this hope and continue to
share this message with those they
love. Please join us in unpacking
these 26 words to find out what do
they mean to us & for us. No status
too low – No hour too late – No place
too far – However- Whenever –
Wherever....

Whoever includes you.... Forever....
He loves. He gave.
We believe. We live.

Would you like to accept the 3:16
promise? You can. Tell God you
accept him.

“Father, I believe you love me. You
gave your one and only Son so I can
live forever with you. Apart from you,
I die. With you, I live. I choose life. I
choose you.”

Jesus awaits your prayer. Believe in
him and you will...

Not...

Perish...

You will have life, eternal life,
forever.

<https://www.crossway.org/tracts/316-2728/>

Please come & join us. class meets at
10:30 right after fellowship hour.

CHILDRENS CHURCH:

The children continue the Summer
Series AT HOME with GOD...“Families
of Old Testament” ... They will learn

about Abraham & Sarah, Abraham &
Lot, Sarah & Issac, Issac & Rebecca.



The June meeting of Best Years met
at the Blacksmith Shoppe hosted by
Iva. There were 23 present. Iva said
grace & lively conversation along
with good food followed. July
Birthdays are Evelin Hamilton 7/17 &
Bob Swanson 7/31. No anniversaries.
Iva asked for prayers for: Art Schuck
& has went for rehab at Symphony in
Chesterton, Doris Burkus for a pulled
tendon in foot, & Virginia Bradford
who is home recovering from back
surgery.

Welcomed to the group were, Mike
& Deb Harris, Joyce Blint, & Bob
Russell.

Attendance gifts of various snacks,
were won by Ann Riedstra, Bette
Schaefer, Ben Rison, Gail Dailey,
Steve Everingham, Lester Chadwick,
& Rose Lenig.

Others present were Art Lenig,
Sharon Campos, Connie Reynolds,
Mar Kessler, Linda Everingham, Joe &
Susan Knowlton, JoElly Chadwick,
Karen Rison, Shirley & Wayne
Kirkham, Evelin Hamilton, Bob
Swanson.

The July meeting will be July 17, at
the Blacksmith Shoppe, hosted by
Wayne & Shirley Kirkham.



July

8 Jeremy &
Stefanie
Obenchain

10 David & Sandy Wasielewski

14 Austin & Jessica (Chadwick)
Broadway

21 Barry & Cheryl Pumroy

22 Damion & Tonya Chadwick

23 Harold & Carrie Carlson

25 Roy & Ann Gropp

27 Jim & Dottie Sue Davis

29 Joseph & Pam Pask

31 Bruce & Deborah Wordinger



01 Carrie Chadwick

01 Mason Kovalcin

05 Dave Schaefer

05 Everingham

08 Jean Dare

08 Tom Kesling

09 John Boyd

09 Richard Livinghouse

12 Amanda Lullenberg

14 Kathleen Jack

15 Eli Adams

17 Matthew Chadwick

17 Evelin Hamilton

18 Robert Adams

19 Haley Schuck

19 Abigail Siford

19 Lea Richardson

22 Mason Askew

22 Thomas Thresh

23 Grant Krivak

25 Barbara Parker

26 Kim Richardson

28 Ryan Nickerson

29 Julie Phillips

29 Daniel Siford

30 Mike Krivak

31 Jared Dare



If you have a
need or you know
someone that
needs prayers, Call Pastor JoEllyn
and she will relay to the next person
to activate the Prayer Chain.

Pastor JoEllyn's Cell phone # for
After Hours Emergency & Prayer
Chain Request

(219)-363-5061

July FOOD PANTRY Requests

Always Need plastic bags

Canned Fruit,



**Canned Carrots,
Any Cereal
FOOD**

PANTRY UPDATE



1. DOLLAR FOR DOGS

The event at Kabelin's was very successful thanks to all who came and bought a hotdog and purchased some of the bake goods. The hot dogs and buns and grill are a donation of Kabelin's. The bake goods were made by the members of the Food Pantry's Board of Directors. Therefore, the event is a total profit for the Food Pantry. Thanks again for your support. The profit was \$576.

On August 31st another **Dollar for Dogs** and **bake sale** will be held at Kabelin's West End. Please come and support this event. To help us more, anyone wanting to donate a baked item - cookies, cake, bread, pretzels, pies etc, the Directors would be greatly **appreciated**.

2. 5 K RUN, WALK SEPTEMBER 21

This event is held at St. John Kanty Church on 600E. The run or walk is around Saugany Lake. Participation entry sheets will be available at the church or on the web site. Pam Pask is in charge of this event. More information will be available, but keep the date on your calendar.

3. TRIVIA, SILENT AUCTION AND SUPPER

OCTOBER 12, 2019 3PM - 7PM

Instead of the Port-a-Pit, this event is replacing it. It will be held at the RP

United Methodist church. A fun time. Gather up a group to be your team. More information will be given later. Just mark your calendar.

4. Our church is in need of a representative for the Food Pantry Board of Directors. Harold Carlson has served faithfully for several years, but felt he no longer could continue as the church's representative. Anyone interested in serving in this capacity please contact Rose Lenig and the responsibilities will be given to you so you can decide if this is something you would like to be involved.....



By Penny Derucki

On June 11, 2019, the Rolling Prairie United Methodist Women gathered at the home of Cheryl Lenig. We enjoyed ham and cheese sandwiches on seasoned buns, chips, fresh, sherbet and cookies fruit. Many thanks, Cheryl for sharing your beautiful home with us.

We shared cares and concerns and prayers for healing for Pam Dixon, Rose Lenig, Rose and Art Lenig's Great-grandson Trea and for Pastor JoEllyn's daughter. We will be making a \$500.00 donation to help support the New Prairie Schools lunch program. The first day of school for our New Prairie kids is August 7, 2019 this year. I will soon be bringing in our collection tub for school supplies. The sales usually begin

after the 4th of July. Our donation is much needed and sincerely appreciated.

Mark your calendars –**EUCHRE FUNdraiser**, Saturday, September 21, 2019 - Cost \$10.00 per person, includes walking taco lunch. Food served from 5-6pm (CST), cards start at 6pm (CST)- 8:45. Prizes 1st - \$25m 2nd. \$15 3rd \$10 awarded at 9:00 (CST). There will not be a silent auction this time. Grab your partner or come alone. It is a night of fun, laughter and fellowship for a great cause-supporting UMW mission projects.

It was just an ordinary Saturday evening, a group of friends were sitting around a table talking, waiting for the euchre fun night to start and we were just really enjoying each other's company and the conversation turned to cell phones. More specifically about the ability to answer them. It seems like how many times someone tries to teach you to answer the phone, doesn't really matter. And, sometimes it's not even your phone that you need to answer. I heard someone talking in my kitchen, there was a green light coming from my purse. It wasn't someone talking, it was C.W. McCall singing, **Convoy**. Seems that my nephew had put his phone in my brown purse instead of his wife's brown purse. I found that out the next day, but if I could have figured out how to answer it, at least he would have known where his phone was. We

were having a good time, lending support and offering assistance. I called us the **Circle of Sister's in Christ**. All are welcome to join. At this month's meeting, one of our members wanted to share with us an issue with Restroom Signage. You know, too many pictures to choose from! They should have the word Women – Men, as well as picture. She unfortunately, did not make the RIGHT decision! We lent her support and her husband offered his assistance.

Our next meeting will be July 16, 2019, one week later due to the fair, at 9:30am at the church. Joann Nickerson will be our hostess and Pastor JoEllyn has invited Fern Eddy Schultz to be our speaker. Her program will come before our business meeting...

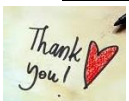
Come join us.... We'll be saving you a seat...



To Mike Harris, Denny Masek, Wayne Kirkham for getting the building

all up to snuff with all the preliminary things, water turned on, fryer ready for those french fries & tenderloins, coffee maker hooked up, so Iva has her coffee to start her early morning day, grills & steam table ready to use, & all else that need done in getting the building spruced up & readied to open to serve all those fair goers who will be eating at our Fine Eatery Establishment...

WORD OF GOD SERVED ALL DAY



To all who came to make pies for our Fair Eatery...



& to everyone who came out & cleaned the building.



Arthur Schuck (rehab for pneumonia), Abigail Smith (21 yr old granddaughter Susan & Joe Knowlton, suffered a stroke) Tony Primmer (stomach issues, friend Rose Lenig) Alta Rison (transitioning to a home away of home, Ben/Karen Rison mother), William Budig (cancer, friend Mason Phillips), Holly Patti (home recuperating, granddaughter Sue Hughes, sister Lynsey Daley), Doris Burkus (pulled tendon in foot, friend Barbara Parker/Donna Cain), Scott Thieme (health issue), Virginia Bradford (recovering Back surgery), Diane Stienbarger (back surgery, Sue Flagg sister), Bob Lenters (Cancer & Heart, Ann Riedstra brother,) Brenda Crass (depression, daughter Kathy Crass), Susan Knowlton (home - pneumonia), Brad Nimtz (home-Cancerous lymph nodes, Sherry & Paul Iwaszewski son-in-law) Carolyn Hunt (Chemo friend of JoEllyn, Bette, Deb) Pat Majot (heart issues, friend of Bette & Dave) Lloyd Knowlton (cancer, Joe/Susan Knowlton's brother) Kathy Crass (awaiting biopsy report of thyroid) Pat Tucker (Congestive Heart Failure & Afib, Lisa's grandmother) Joe Spence (health issues brother in law Joe Knowlton) Mike Harris (Chemo) Pam Dixon, (Home feeling better, resuming Chemo soon), Sally Grindle (knee replacement, friend Joyce Blint), Trea Terry (recovering from serious car accident, great grandson, Art & Rose) Joe Knowlton (health issues) Carrie Chadwick (maintain back pain, Pastor JoEllyn daughter) Bette Elkins (Chemo,) Phillip Heminger (cancer) Kathy Heminger (Health Issue, cousins Bobette & Jeff Elkins) Debbie Baughman (recovering back surgery, sister

Bobette/Jeff Elkins) Betty Schimmel (cancer, sister Jeff/Bobette Elkins) Richard Asvitt (feeling better, brother Virginia/Dave Bradford)

We have a few very special people in our church family that are struggling with various health concerns who wish to not be named. Please keep their UNSPOKEN REQUESTS lifted in prayer, as God knows who each of them are and what it is they need. Give them strength Oh Lord, to deal with whatever their struggle... Let them feel your arms embracing them with your warm, wonderful, love.. Bless them with your Peace. Thank You, God....

If you want someone to remain on or add please fill out new request card or call Pastor JoEllyn or Bette 219-778-2910

Jacob Adams US Army- States grandson Chris Adams
Craig Carlson, (pilot) US Air Force son Harold & Carrie Carlson
Matthew Chadwick US Army - son Lester & JoEllyn Chadwick
Michael Showalter Marines, grandson Wayne & Shirley Kirkham
Matthew Rompca Air Force nephew Shirley & Wayne Kirkham
Katelyn Williamson U S Marines



Daughter of Al and granddaughter of Jim Williamson
If you have someone serving and would like on our prayer list

please let Bette know...
Please lift all those serving our country, who are struggling, for whatever the reason; being alone, illness, divorce, loss of job, loss of loved ones, going through the firsts after death of loved one. Give thanks for everything.... Hear our Prayers, Oh Lord!

Thank you to those who have given to the Kings Club to support the missions of our church.



**Kings Club Offerings
for the month of
June :**

**Sue Flagg gave in celebration of:
June Lenig's 80th Birthday**

*Kings club offerings go to support the local missions supported by the Missions and Outreach Committee. Which includes The Rolling Prairie Food Pantry, Hope Rescue Mission, Broadway Christian Parish, the Local Emergency Fund, and the Journey to Bethlehem. Donations of any amount are appreciated and accepted.



The New "Smoking"

Have you heard that sitting is the new smoking? You may have wondered, Is sitting really that bad for me? Studies from the American Institute of Cancer Research (AICR) have determined that regular movement throughout the day is important for reducing cancer risk ("Make Time for Break Time"). It also has been determined that a routine that includes regular movement can reduce the risk of a number of chronic diseases. Conventional wisdom has taught us that getting at least 30 minutes of exercise each day, or 150 minutes each week, is important to our health. But there is more to it than just routinely hitting the gym or going for a walk each day. We can improve our health and reduce

the risk of disease by simply getting up and moving frequently throughout the day. In today's economy, more of us "work" with our minds at a computer rather than producing product through physical activity, making it much harder to be as active as we should be at work. In order to be physically active throughout the day, we must be intentional. One general recommendation set forth by the Shape Up America initiative is to get a minimum of 10,000 steps each day. That may be difficult for those who work at a desk. Taking trips to the water fountain, bathroom, copy machine, taking the stairs instead of the elevator can add a few extra steps throughout the day. New standing desks and elevating desktop options can create a more active workspace.

So if sitting truly is the new smoking, we need to ensure that we are moving more throughout the day to prevent against the adverse effects of a sedentary life. Setting a timer throughout the day may help you initiate periods of movement. Some of the newest pedometers on the market have a feature that reminds you when you have not been active for a certain period of time. A pedometer also helps us get a better idea of how active we truly are throughout the day.

Choosing which pedometer to purchase may be a challenge as there are so many choices, including a number of apps for your smartphone. Research sponsored by the American

Council on Exercise (ACE) looked at five popular pedometers to determine which ones tested out the best: Nike+Fuelband, Fitbit Ultra, Jawbone UP, BodyMedia FitCore and Adidas MiCoach. The bottom line is that all the pedometers were within 10 percentage accuracy at counting actual steps taken; however, agility movements with shorter steps, quicker movements and less arm use were not as accurately measured. If a pedometer is not for you, find other ways to frequently remind yourself to move throughout the day.

Finding a fitness activity partner can be a big boost to your motivation and enjoyment, and the relationship can add an additional benefit. It is all about finding what works best for you. Your optimum health is worth it. Gretchen Krivak MS, RD, CGFI, EIM-1

The sweetest time of the day is when you pray, because you are talking to the one who loves you the most..

Can I get an Amen?



The price for our freedom has been paid.

<https://www.sermons4kids.com/freedom-isnt-free.html>

For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. Hebrews 9:15



The flag reminds me that this month we will celebrate a very important holiday. The 4th of July. July 4th

is also known as Independence Day. Do you know what independence means? It means freedom, doesn't it? In our country we enjoy a lot of freedom. We are free to come to church and worship, we are free to choose what we want to be when we grow up, we are free to choose where we want to live, we are free to choose most of the things that affect our daily lives.

Now, this might come as a surprise to some of you, but did you know that freedom isn't free? That's right, someone had to pay the price for us to have the freedom that we enjoy. There are men and women, from our towns, and state this morning who have helped to pay that price. Some have served in the Army, Navy, Marines, or Air Force. Many of them have fought in wars and some may have been wounded. There are probably some people you may know who had loved ones who paid the ultimate price for freedom. They gave their lives fighting for our freedom.

Yes, we have a lot of freedom, but the greatest freedom that we have is the freedom that we have in Christ Jesus. The Bible teaches that the penalty for sin is death, but you and I have been set free from this penalty. We have been set free because Jesus paid the penalty. The Bible tells us that Jesus died to set us free from the penalty of sin. Instead of death, we have been given eternal life. This freedom wasn't free, Jesus paid the price.

This week as we celebrate Independence Day, let us remember to stop and thank God for those who

have paid the price for our freedom. But even more important, let us remember to thank God for Jesus, who has set us free from the penalty for sin, because he was willing to pay the price.

Dear God, thank you for the freedom that we enjoy in our country. We are thankful for those who paid the price for that freedom, but even more important, we thank you for the freedom we have because Jesus was willing to pay the penalty for our sin. Amen.

What is a Psalm?

The Psalms remind me of the word "songs." They were originally written as musical expressions of worshiping God. They reflect on His goodness, His holiness, His power, His deliverance, His provisions and the salvation that is found only in Him. **David** wrote most of the Psalms but not all of them. In most Bible's you can see who the author was. David was also an extraordinarily gifted musician and King Saul loved to hear David play. It was always soothing to him in his often troubled spirit. Worship music has a way of reaching deep into the depths of the believer's soul and lift it out of the darkest of nights. A Psalm is a praise song and is a poetic work of art. We are focusing on one of the most widely recognize and beloved...the **23rd Psalm**, often called the **Shepherd's Psalm**.

The Great Shepherd

Today we know that Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd. He watches over His little flock, the church. He is the Head of the Church and its provider and protector, just as a real shepherd was to his sheepfold. David was a shepherd before he was a king and so he could see the symbolism of God's shepherding His people when he wrote Psalm 23.

[Psalm 23 – The Lord is my Shepherd](#)

I offer this line-by-line exposition of the 23rd Psalm so that we can look to see exactly what David is telling us under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The symbolism of the 23rd Psalm has much more meaning to us today than we might imagine that it did in David's day, which was an agrarian society.

Psalm 23

1 *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

God is our Shepherd and like a Good Shepherd, He will provide for His own for every need we will ever have (Philippians 4:19). It does not mean that He will provide for every thing we want, but for everything that we need. He is a faithful Shepherd that provides for His sheep (Matthew 6:33).

2 *He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.*

Here is an interesting line. We often get so busy in our lives that we don't have the sense to take our rest in Him, so He makes *me to lie down*.

The Lord is my Shepherd. What more should I want?

Sheep are not very smart. They have to be forced to rest. Sounds familiar to me. Sheep also frequently feed until there is bare ground and stubble, but the Good Shepherd makes us lie down in *green pastures*. In the pastures we can get fed and we must feed on Him for He is the Word of God (John 1) and we can dine daily on the Bread of Life. Sheep are also afraid of moving water and even if they are dying of thirst, they will not go near a running brook or creek...but they love the still waters. They can drink freely from Him Who is the Living Water. He leads us, you might notice, because we are all like sheep and we go astray, and we can't always find the still waters. More often we end up in troubled waters, well over our heads.

3 *He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.*

When we grow weary and fainthearted with the troubles of life, He restores and refreshes us. This "restoring" is also a restoration from eternal death to eternal life. Sheep are not always aware of where they are going. In fact, sheep have been known to walk right off a cliff and so the Good Shepherd leads us *in the paths* and His path leads to His righteousness. Not for our sake but for His glory and *for His name's sake*. One of the chief purposes of mankind is to glorify God and to glorify God *for His name's sake*. God will not share His glory with another. Why should He? He is worthy of all glory.

4 *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*

Sheep are susceptible to predators. Satan is said to be like a roaring lion who roams around seeking whom he might devour but He is walking in the shadows with us. Satan stalks and crouches down low so as to spring on unsuspecting prey. Our daily walk with God is fraught with trials, troubles, and risks, but He is *with* us throughout our life. That is why we don't have to fear evil. It is because He is with us that we should not fear. Sheep without a shepherd can easily be frightened and startled to death and die of a heart attack.

Why could a rod help the shepherd? It was because the rod was used to protect against predators, to defend the sheep in case of attack, to guide the sheep, and to keep them in the right path and not wander from it. The rod was not only useful for a weapon but symbolizes authority over the sheep.

The staff on the other hand had a bend in it. This bend was fitted perfectly for bringing in the stray sheep by their necks. It was so perfectly shaped that it would never choke the sheep but it was narrow enough to be able to bring the sheep back into the fold in a gentle, loving, yet firm way. If sheep end up on their backs, they could not right themselves and would die of starvation on their backs. That is why it was comforting to the sheep to have the shepherd near them. The staff kept them in the fold, kept them on their feet, kept them free from harm and kept them free from fear. The rod and staff, even from the time of the ancient Egyptians, have been symbols of royalty.

5 *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.*

God is preparing a place at His table for us. This reminds me of the Great Marriage Supper of the Lamb of God when we will dine with our Lord on that Great Day of the Wedding Feast. John wrote that "*Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!*" And he added, "*These are the true words of God*" (Revelation 19:9).

Remember that Jesus said to the disciples before He left that "*I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am*" (John 14:3). Jesus said, "*Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God*" (Luke 14:15).

The anointing of oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit and it also pictured the anointing of the kings and priests which believers are destined to be someday (Revelation 5:10).

Finally, the cup that runs over is symbolic of Eastern hospitality. When a guest was welcome to stay, they intentionally overflowed the cup so that the guest realized that they were

welcome to all that the hosts had and could stay as long as they wanted. This is indicative of eternal life in Christ. We will abide with Him for all eternity.

6 *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me. All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.*

With a sense of assuredness, David understood that mercy and goodness would follow him. Not just while he was king, but all the days of his life. God has said that He is the God of the living and not of the dead (Luke 20:38), thus he knew that he would *dwell in the house of the Lord Forever*. This is an Old Testament revelation of what is to come for those who are His. It is a prophecy that will be fulfilled by Christ at the physical death of all believers. We will dwell in the house of the Lord, which is the Kingdom of God, forever and without end. That is nothing less than eternal life (John 3:16).

Conclusion

What comfort it is to know that our Lord will provide for our every need (v 1), that He will provide the Bread of Life and Well of Water that never runs dry (v 2), that He will lead us down the right path for His glory's sake and restore us at death to eternal life (v 3), that His staff and rod will protect us, guided us, and preserved us (v 4), that even now, He is preparing a place for us and will come again someday because we have the Holy Spirit (v 5), and no good thing will be withheld from us and we will dwell with Him for ages without end in the Kingdom of God (v 6). This short little Psalm is packed with powerful promises, provisions, and purpose. The Lord is my Shepherd. What more *should* I want?

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God is Good.... All the time!