

The Good Shepherd

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference

John 10:11-18

Church Season

Easter 4

Lesson Focus

Jesus takes care of us.



Tear here for easy use!

Gather (10 minutes)

Center Time

Kids practice caring for stuffed animals, form a shepherd's staff out of modeling clay, and color Bible story pictures.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible,
Coloring Pages



Supplies

Stuffed animals, small containers, basket, bandanas, modeling clay (soft), blank paper, crayons or markers

Circle Time

Kids are welcomed with a bell and greeted by a lamb.

None

Bell, lamb puppet or stuffed lamb toy

Prayer Time

Kids practice "being still" in prayer.ople.c

None

Bell

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

The Good Shepherd Storytelling

Leader reads aloud from the Spark Story Bible

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible

Supplies

None

Find the Lost Lamb

Kids look for the lost lambs in the leaflet.

Leaflet

Markers or crayons

Lost Lamb

Kids listen to discover where the "lamb" is hiding.

None

Lamb puppet or stuffed lamb toy

Lesson At-A-Glance

Tear here for easy use!

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Little Lost Lambs Kids look for lost lambs on the leaflet.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Markers
Favorite Pets Kids identify and talk about pets on the leaflet.	Leaflets	None
Pet Care Kids show how to care for various pets.	None	Stuffed animals, small containers, basket, bandanas, pet brush

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Good-bye Time Kids hear about the Faith on the Go! activity and add stones to the class altar.	Leaflets	Small, quarter-sized polished rocks; basket or bowl
Prayer Time Kids thank God.	Family Page 	Bell



Visit www.sparksondayschool.org for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: a Coloring Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

Gather (10 minutes)

Center Time

You may choose to set up all or some of these learning centers for children to play in as they arrive in your classroom. Have helpers in each center to help children with the activities. Kids can stay in one center or travel to more than one.

When all children have arrived and have had time to participate in at least one learning center, use a small bell three times to announce: 1) clean up, 2) get ready, 3) move!

Listen to my bell. When I ring it once it means, "Let's clean up!" When I ring it twice it means, "Get ready!" And when I ring it three times it means, "It's time to come and join our friends in the circle." Let's follow the bell to Circle Time!

Continue ringing the bell as you lead the kids to the Circle Time area.

Caring for Pets

Set up a small corner with a variety of stuffed animals from the prop box. Create a pet bed with the basket and bandanas. Put out dishes so kids can help feed the animals.

Shepherd's Staff

Set the modeling clay and Spark Story Bible (open to the Good Shepherd story) on a table. Show the kids the shepherd's staff. Invite the kids to roll the clay into a long piece and bend the top quarter to form the same shape.

Coloring Center

Have coloring supplies available at a table for the kids to color. Be sure to help them put their names on their paper.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible

Coloring Pages



Supplies

Bell

Stuffed animals

Small containers

Basket

Bandanas

Soft modeling clay

Blank paper

Crayons or markers

Tear here for easy use!

Circle Time

Hide the puppet behind your back until kids are done with the welcome. Gather at Circle Time, with everyone sitting on the floor. **Welcome friends.** Use the ASL sign for welcome. **Let's sing and sign our welcome song.** Sing to the tune of "Are You Sleeping?"

Welcome, [Name] (ASL sign for welcome)
Welcome, [Name] (ASL sign for welcome)
Hear God's Word. (cup ears)
Hear God's Word. (cup ears)
We can follow Jesus. (ASL sign for Jesus)
We can follow Jesus. (ASL sign for Jesus)
Welcome, friends. (ASL sign for welcome)
Welcome, friends. (ASL sign for welcome)

Repeat until every kid and adult has been welcomed.

Next, hold up today's leaflet and point to the lectionary symbol. **This symbol tells us it is Easter!** Pause. **Tell me what you see.** Pause for kids' observations. **We have finally arrived at the cross. It is Easter and we can rejoice!**

Well, where did you come from? Pause, look at lamb. **Are you lost?** Pause and put lamb up to ear. **You're looking for your shepherd? Hmmm, boys and girls, have we seen any shepherds today?** Hold puppet to ear. **Oh, your shepherd is Jesus.** Hold puppet to ear. **You want to talk to the kids?**

Change voices/lamb speaking. **Jesus is my shepherd. A shepherd takes care of little lambs like me. A shepherd makes sure we have what we need and that we're safe. Jesus is a good shepherd. He cares for his sheep. I love Jesus.**

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Bell
Lamb puppet our stuffed
lamb toy



Welcome



Jesus

Tear here for easy use!

Prayer Time

Before we read our Bible story, let's pray and get our hearts quiet to hear God's words.

Close your eyes and fold your hands. Let's see how still we can be. After I ring the bell, let's be quiet, like God's quiet voice, and pray a quiet prayer. Ring bell and wait. Allow the kids to practice "quiet" prayer for as long as they are able.

Amen.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Bell

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

The Good Shepherd Storytelling

Let's take a big stretch! Pause for kids to stretch. **Good! Now we're ready to listen to today's Bible story: The Good Shepherd. A shepherd is someone who takes care of sheep. I wonder if there will be a sheep in the story!**

Take out your Spark Story Bible and pass out Bibles to the kids if you have copies for them too. Help them find The Good Shepherd story on page 436 of the Spark Story Bible. Read the story out loud and point to the corresponding pictures. Look for Squiggles, the caterpillar, in each picture. Ask kids what they think Squiggles is feeling or doing. Encourage them to make a face like Squiggles.

Ask the following questions, allowing time for kids to answer. **What special name does Jesus call himself?** (Hint: Say Good _____.) **What animal does a shepherd care for?** (*Sheep, lambs.*) **Jesus cares for animals and Jesus cares for us!**

Let's talk about some things people lose. Why do we look for lost things? Share something you lost and how you found it to get the conversation started.

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bible

Supplies
None

Tear here for easy use!

Find the Lost Lamb

Give each kid a leaflet. Point to the picture on the front of the leaflet.

Do you see Jesus, the Good Shepherd? Point to him. **Can you find the lost lamb?** Point to the lamb. **With your finger, help Jesus find the lost lamb.** Show kids how to trace the dotted line with a finger. Repeat the activity with a marker or crayon.

Spark Resources
Leaflet

Supplies
Markers or crayons

Lost Lamb

While the kids' eyes are closed, hide the lamb puppet somewhere in the room.

Then say: **There's a lost lamb in our classroom. Who would like to be the Good Shepherd and help find it?** (Take volunteers.) **As you get close to the lamb I will make a "ba-a-a" sound. The closer you get, the louder I will "ba-a-a." Listen for my voice.**

As kids gets nearer to the hidden lamb, "ba-a-a" louder until they find it. Let others take a turn both hiding and finding the lost lamb. Reinforce the name Good Shepherd as the kids look for the lost lamb.

Spark Resources
None

Supplies
Lamb puppet or stuffed lamb toy

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

Little Lost Lambs

There are lost lambs hiding on our leaflet today. Let's see if we can help Jesus, the Good Shepherd, find them. Give each kid lamb stickers to "hide" on their leaflet. Work together to find the lost lambs and circle them.

Spark Resources
Leaflet
Lesson Stickers

Supplies
Markers

Favorite Pets

Hand out the car sticker and help kids place it at the beginning of the road pictured on the back of the leaflet. **This family is going to choose a new pet to bring home. What kind of pets do you see in the picture?** Pause and take time to identify animals on leaflet. **What kind of pet would you want to bring home?** Allow kids time to answer. **What would you name your new pet?** Allow kids to answer. **This family will need to work together to take care of these animals. What will they do if the pet gets sick? (Take it to the animal doctor.) What if the pet is hungry? (Feed it.) And, if a pet ever gets lost, they will look for it until they find it. Just like Jesus our Good _____.** Let them fill in the word. Encourage a continued conversation of kids' experiences of each of the photos if there is time.

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
None

Tear here for easy use!

Pet Care

How do we care for pets?

Bring the props from the “Caring for Pets” center into the circle and invite kids to act out their suggested answers. Listen if stories emerge.

What if your pet is a dog? A fish? A bird? A sheep?

We care for pets because we love them. They depend on us to take care of them. We keep them safe and give them what they need, just like Jesus the Good Shepherd.

Find the symbol for Easter on the leaflet. **What color do you see on your leaflet?** (*White.*) **That’s right, white is the color for Easter! What Easter picture do you see?** (*Easter egg.*) **We remember Easter because we can see the _____** (*Easter egg.*)

During Easter, everything starts to wake up. Let’s pretend we are a little tiny seed that’s been sleeping all winter underground. Curl up in a little ball. That’s right. We’ve been sleeping all winter. Now the ground is warming up. We stretch up our hands. Out they pop right out of the ground. My, it’s bright up here. Let’s stretch some more. Pop up your head. Feel the lovely sunshine. Up, up, up you come until your whole body shoots up. You’re blooming!

Just like a little seed, Jesus was buried in a tomb. On Easter, the warm rays of God’s love brought him back to life. Jesus is the Shepherd who always takes care of us. On Easter we say, he is RISEN!

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Stuffed animals
Small containers
Basket
Bandanas
Pet brush

Tear here for easy use!

Send (5 minutes)

Good-bye Time

Be sure to send leaflets home with kids.

We had a lot of fun helping Jesus the Good Shepherd find all those lost lambs. We also talked about how we can care for animals because we love them and want them to be happy. When you go home, ask your family to go visit a pet at a friend's house, petting zoo, or pet store. You can bless the animals like Jesus blesses us!

It's time for our blessing. Sit down. The blessing song is a piggyback song sung to the tune of "Good Night Ladies."

God bless [Name]. (ASL *bless* sign)

God bless [Name]. (ASL *bless* sign)

God bless [Name], (ASL *bless* sign)

God bless me! (point to self)

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Small, quarter-sized polished rocks
Basket or bowl



Bless

Tear here for easy use!

Prayer Time

When we started class today we said a quiet prayer. Let's end our class by saying a prayer out loud all together. When I ring the bell, let's all say, "thank you" to God using our happy voices for our Sunday School class today.

Ring bell.

Amen.

Be sure to send leaflets home with kids, and give each of them a Family Page to take home.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

Bell