

# still waters

home church studies

## Psalm 23

[Worship]

1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; 3 he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff-- they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

### Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

The Holy Spirit confronts every person with a choice: Choose death or choose life; choose continuing oppression or choose liberation; choose selfishness or choose sacrifice. In the Acts 2:42-47 passage, the followers of Jesus Christ choose life.

In the face of unspoken threat, they refuse to be confined, rendered timid, or silent. They opt for a life of community and risk, marked by street presence, jail, preaching in court to the authorities, prayer and table gatherings and support, and then back to the streets. The new believers formed support groups where they could learn God's Word, pray, and mature in the faith. They broke bread together and shared all things in common so that all could benefit from God's gifts.

The early Christians were part of a new community formed out of the life, struggle, suffering, death, and new life of Jesus Christ. In John 10:1-10, Jesus is the Good Shepherd

who offers a more abundant life by transcending the rules of authority. The system could not contain or domesticate him. In a world based on competence, possessions, and achievements, Jesus creates the new space of friendship, sharing, and service.

Samaritans, women, tax collectors, lepers, outcasts, and the poor gather around a common table and the whole body is discerned. Sisters and brothers experience a face-to-face encounter with themselves, one another, and with the spirit and power of the risen Christ. At this table a meal is shared, baptism is celebrated, and the community begins the journey of following Christ.

Reflection Questions: Are you in need of being invited to the table? Who needs to be invited to your table? How are you engaged in receiving, giving, and needing support?

Yvonne V. Delk

[The Scripture]

## John 10.1-10



1 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. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." 6 Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. 7 So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."