Lesson 1

Roundup Leader Devotion

Bible Story: Jesus Is the Good Shepherd

John 10:1–18

Bible Memory Verse:
“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.” Psalm 23:1

Read John 10:1–18 and Think on These Things:

The parable of the Good Shepherd stands near the center of the Gospel of John.

**John 10:1–6** Jesus begins this parable with a job description of a shepherd. A shepherd enters the sheepfold by the door. His sheep recognize his voice, and he knows their names. A thief or robber climbs in for evil purposes! A stranger calls, but the sheep won’t follow. Instead, they head the other way!

**John 10:7–10** Then Jesus says, “I am the door of the sheep” (v. 7). He distinguishes Himself from those who came before Him. He is the door through which we enter to find green pasture and abundant life.

**John 10:11–18** Having described the job of a shepherd, Jesus takes it up a notch and declares, “I am the good shepherd”—not just once, but twice. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A good shepherd knows his sheep, and they know him. Our Good Shepherd does the will of His Father. He lays down His life and gathers the sheep into one flock with one Shepherd. That’s the Good Shepherd’s job description, as given by God the Father.

Jesus is our Good Shepherd. Even when we wander away in sin—and especially because we are vulnerable to attacks by sin and Satan—Jesus cares for us, protects us, provides for us, and is with us all the times. What’s our response? We give Him thanks and praise for His gracious and abundant care.

**Take-Home Point:**

Jesus cares, now and forever!

When kids get scared, they need someone to care for them. They need someone who comes alongside them to help. They need someone to protect them and provide what they need. God gives us people in this life to do that: parents and family, pastors and teachers, friends and neighbors. Jesus cares. He is with us. He provides for us. He protects. His care is for today and for all eternity. We need Jesus.

**Jesus Gathers Us Together:** As the Good Shepherd, Jesus gathers us together in His Church. He takes care of all our needs, now and forever. He takes care of us by protecting us from sin and Satan. He takes care of us by providing for all our needs of body and soul. He laid down His life for us, giving us forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation through the Word and in the Sacraments.

**Prayer:** Jesus, You are the Good Shepherd. You care for us, and You care for the kids who are coming to VBS. We were as helpless as sheep against the enemies of sin, Satan, and death, but You provided protection and salvation, now and forever. Lead us to follow You just as sheep follow their shepherd. Bless our time with these kids as they learn about You and Your care. In Your holy name we pray. Amen.
Welcome, *Poster Fun*, and Learning Areas

20 minutes

Play music from the Leader CD in the background. Have Helpers with nametags stationed inside and outside of the entrance to greet and direct families to the welcome table. While helping children with nametags and attendance stickers, ask the parents/caregivers to use the *Sign In & Out Sheet* each day. Have the children put their sheep in the sheep pen to take attendance.

**SAY:** Hi, I’m (Leader’s name). (Child’s name), welcome to *Barnyard Roundup*! We’ll do so many fun activities here. We’ll learn about Jesus and His love for us. We’ll hear how He is with us, providing for us and protecting us. You can go to the *Poster Fun* table. The Helpers will give you the posters and directions.

**Poster Fun** Helpers give out posters and directions. Make sure first and last names are printed on the posters. Remind parents to leave the posters on the table before moving to the next activity. Helpers will gather and sort posters alphabetically by last name to prepare for Lesson 2.

**Arranging the classroom:** You may choose to decorate the classroom as a barnyard. In addition to the learning areas, you may set up an area for pretend play that includes farm toys and blocks for creating pens and barns. Another quiet area can have several farm-themed books in a basket. Be sure to include children’s Bibles and Bible story books that reflect the lessons for the week. Carpet squares or tablecloths work well to define seating areas. You will need a bell to use for transition times. A cowbell would fit the farm theme, but singing, playing a few notes on a recorder or flute, or using a “sheepdog” puppet would be a more accurate representation of rounding up sheep.

Jesus cares, now and forever!

John 10:1–18

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**Today You Need**

**Leader and Student Materials** *(p. 10)*

**Every Lesson Supplies** *(p. 11)*

**Learning Area Supplies:** 2–5 sheep pens on trays; 2–5 small appetizer tongs; 2–5 bowls of cotton balls; dice (optional); toy animals (farm and wild animals); sheep ears and shepherd staffs (optional); green, blue, and brown towels (optional); sheep pattern (optional)

**Storytelling Supplies:** Tag labeled “217” for Polly’s ear; brown yarn or rope; Shepherd, Thief, and Wolf figures printed from Leader CD, attached to craft sticks, and placed in balls of play dough; 1 sheep for each child; green fabric or felt; blue fabric or felt; large stick or cane; bandana

See the Master Supply List on Leader CD for complete list for all lessons.

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**Poster Fun for Parents and Kids**

**You need:** *Poster Fun*, pencil or pen, brown crayons, and *Shepherd Sticker*

**Parents:** Print your child’s first and last name on the front. Look at the picture on the front with your child. **SAY:** Look at this farm picture! At *Barnyard Roundup*, you will learn all kinds of things about being on a farm. What do you see in the picture? Allow your child to point out things that are familiar to him or her.

Turn over the poster to the back page. Have your child repeat the Lesson 1 Bible Memory Verse after you. Point to the Lesson 1 shepherd’s staff icon. **SAY:** Shepherds use this special tool, called a staff, to protect sheep from other animals that might hurt them. God’s Word helps us learn about Jesus, our Good Shepherd, who protects us. Color the staff brown.

Open *Poster Fun* and point to the Lesson 1 picture. **SAY:** What animal do you see? If you touch a sheep, how does it feel?

Show the *Shepherd Sticker*. **SAY:** A person who takes care of sheep is called a shepherd. Put the *Shepherd Sticker* near the sheep to take care of it. In your story today, you will learn about a special shepherd—the Good Shepherd. It is Jesus! You will learn how the shepherd cares for the sheep and how Jesus cares for us. Repeat after me: JESUS CARES, NOW AND FOREVER.

Leave the activity on the table. Take your child to Learning Area 1. Once your child is engaged in the activity, you may quietly leave.
Transition Activities

Learning Area 1: Make It
Put the Sheep in the Pen

Goal: Use fine motor muscles to put cotton-ball sheep in a pen. The Good Shepherd guards the sheepfold and cares for the sheep.

You need: 2–5 sheep pens (ovals drawn along the edges of a piece of paper; make as simple or detailed as desired) on trays; 2–5 small plastic or wooden appetizer tongs; 2–5 bowls of cotton balls; dice (optional)

SAY: Jesus tells us that He is the Good Shepherd who cares for us. A shepherd takes care of the sheep in the sheep pen and makes sure they stay safe. We will pretend to put sheep in a sheep pen. Share the Take-Home Point and SAY: GATHER ROUND! (Point up and circle hand.) JESUS CARES! TEAMS: (Point up.) JESUS CARES, (Circle hand.) NOW AND FOREVER!

Set out a tray holding a sheep pen, a set of tongs, and a bowl of cotton balls. You may need two to five trays, depending on the size of your group. Children use the tongs to pick up cotton balls and move them inside the pen. Model the activity, as needed. Older preschoolers may enjoy rolling a die, counting the dots and then putting that number of “sheep” in the pen.

Learning Area Options:
Have blank pieces of paper and crayons available. Helpers can encourage children to draw a sheep pen and glue cotton balls inside the pen. They can draw a “good shepherd” (stick person) outside the pen by drawing a person holding a shepherd’s staff. SAY: The good shepherd uses this special tool, called a staff, to help guide the sheep where they need to go or to rescue them if they are in danger.

Bible Story Coloring Pages (Leader CD): Use the lesson’s Coloring Page. Helpers can encourage the children to identify the objects and person on the Coloring Page. Then they can tell the children that they will be hearing this Bible story a little later.

Learning Area 2: Imagine It
Animal Sort

Goal: The children will learn about animals that live on farms by separating them from wild animals.

You need: toy animals, both farm and wild animals (optional: provide photos of animals printed from the Internet)

SAY: God made many wonderful animals. Look at these animals. Can you tell me the names of some of the animals that God made? Have them say the names of animals they know. SAY: Are any of these animals alike? Compare. Allow the children to sort the animals any way they like. SAY: Which of these animals might live on a farm? Can you make the sounds of farm animals? What are some things farm animals need? (Discuss. Guide the children to know that animals need food, water, and shelter.) Do we need those things too? (Yes) Who takes care of animals on a farm? (A farmer) Do you know what the special word is for a person who takes care of sheep? (Shepherd)

SAY: In our Bible story today, we are going to hear about a shepherd taking care of His sheep. Jesus said that He is the Good Shepherd, who takes care of us!

Learning Area 3: Act It Out
Caring for Sheep

Goal: The children act out caring for sheep like a shepherd as they get to know one another’s names.

You need: nothing (optional: sheep ears for the sheep, some shepherd staffs or walking sticks for the shepherds, a green towel for grass, a blue towel for water, and a brown towel for a sheep pen)

Divide the children into two equal groups. One group will be sheep; the other will be shepherds. Assign one sheep to one shepherd. Assure the children that after a while, they will be able to trade roles. If your group is small, you could be the shepherd and the children the sheep; let each child take a turn being the shepherd.

SAY: Sheep, I need you to get down on your hands and knees. What sound does a sheep make? Continue, Shepherds, it is your job to take care of the sheep. It is very important that you know your sheep’s name so you can call your sheep to come to you. Help the children learn one another’s names. SAY: What do sheep eat? If children can’t guess, SAY: It is green and it grows in your front yard. Once they guess grass, SAY: Sheep can’t find grass by themselves. So shepherds, lead your sheep to some grass. Pretend a spot in your room is grass; shepherds lead the sheep there. SAY: What else do sheep need? Help the shepherds guide their sheep to some “water” and a “sheep pen.” SAY: You were such good shepherds. You took good care of your sheep! You made sure they had what they needed and that they were safe. Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He makes sure we have what we need and that we are safe, now and forever.
20 minutes

You need: a small table for an altar area (this could be as simple as a plastic crate turned over with a cloth on top, a cross and a battery-operated candle to place on the altar), Lyrics Sheets, Leader CD, Puppet Scripts and props, Polly the Pig Puppet, bell, Bible

Ring the bell to get everyone’s attention. SING (to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell”):

It’s Bible story time. It’s Bible story time.
We’re going to hear how Jesus cares.
It’s Bible story time!

Repeat as needed, encouraging the children to sing along as they move toward the altar area and are seated.

SAY: I am so happy to have you joining us for our Barnyard Roundup! We have already had some fun, and we will be having more fun later. But now we have the most important part of our day. It is when we get to hear what God tells us in His book, the Bible. Hold up the Bible.

Show the children how to fold their hands. SAY: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. We say those words to remember that God is with us. Now I am going to light the candle to remind us that Jesus is the Light. The sun shines every day, and Jesus shines on us every day! Light the candle.

SING: “I Am Jesus’ Little Lamb” (Leader CD Track 15). Add the following actions:

I am Jesus’ little lamb, (Put hand out in front of body, palm down. Bounce your hand from right to left.)

Ever glad at heart I am; (Touch heart and smile.)

For my Shepherd gently guides me, (Put hand in front of body, palm toward tummy. Take other hand and grab tips of fingers. Use that hand to gently pull palm from right to left.)

Knows my need (Point to head with index finger.)

and well provides me, (Sweep hand across front of body.)

Loves me ev’ry day the same, (Hug self.)

Even calls me by my name. (Keep arms around self or touch heart. nod on each beat. On “name,” stick out index finger and middle finger of each hand, keeping the two together; place one hand on top of the other hand; tap twice.)

Teach the Take-Home Point

SAY: Who cares for you? How do you know they care for you? Give the children time to discuss. SAY: Because we know Jesus cares for us, we don’t need to worry or be afraid. Jesus takes care of everything we need. He even takes care of our biggest need—protecting us from our enemies sin and the devil. Each day, we have peace because we know Jesus is with us and is caring for us, all the time.

SAY: Here at Barnyard Roundup, we have a special way of reminding one another of how God has gathered us together to be His children. Let’s stand up. When you hear me or one of the Helpers say, “GATHER ROUND! JESUS CARES!” while pointing up and making a circle with our hand like this (demonstrate), then you will all say, “JESUS CARES, NOW AND FOREVER!” while doing the same motion. Let’s try it. Are you ready?

SAY: GATHER ROUND! (Point up and circle hand.)

JESUS CARES! KIDS AND LEADERS: (Point up.)

JESUS CARES, (Circle hand.) NOW AND FOREVER!

Now let’s do it again in a whisper voice. Repeat Take-Home Point. Now let’s do it in our loudest voice. Repeat Take-Home Point.

Pray

Have the children sit down. SAY: Now let’s talk to God by praying. Invite the children to fold their hands, bow their heads, and repeat each phrase of the prayer after you. Pause after each forward slash mark (/).

SAY: Jesus, / You are our Good Shepherd. / Help us to listen / and learn / how much You care for us. / We trust in You, Jesus. / Amen.

Opening Puppet Skit

You need: stage, shelf, or table for the puppet skit; Polly the Pig Puppet, Puppet Script (Leader CD), puppet prop

Summary: Pig 217 becomes Polly the Pig when she comes to a new farm, and she starts to understand how much the farmer there cares for her.

After the skit, SAY: I am so glad Polly got a name, aren’t you? And I’m glad she has come to a farm where she will be taken care of. Now let’s hear what Jesus had to say about how the Good Shepherd cares for His sheep. Now it’s time for our Storytelling.
Bible Storytelling

20 minutes

You need: Bible; a piece of brown yarn or rope that will form the sheep pen; Shepherd, Thief, and Wolf figures (Leader CD) from the Lesson 1 Bible Story Poster and glued or taped onto a wooden craft stick and placed in a ball of play dough so they can stand up; 1 sheep for each child (e.g., plastic sheep, sheep figures printed from the Leader CD, pictures of sheep, cotton balls); a piece of green felt or fabric for the green pasture; a round or oval piece of blue fabric or felt for the still water

Note: Lesson 1 Bible Story Poster is also available as clip art on your Leader CD.

Seat the children in a circle so you can tell the story by placing the props on the floor in front of you.

Give each child a sheep. Cue your Helper to assist as needed, moving props or saying the sheep names.

Hold up the Bible and SAY: In the Bible, Jesus tells us that He is the Good Shepherd who cares for His sheep. Do you know who His sheep are? You! I am going to give you each a sheep to help me tell the story.

Use a piece of yarn or rope to make a circle on the floor. SAY: This is a sheep pen. It is also called a sheepfold. It is a wall or a fence. Why do you think the sheep need to be in a pen? (So they won’t get lost and so wild animals can’t get to them)

I would like each of you to put your sheep in the sheepfold. Say the name of your sheep as you put it in. Your sheep should have your name.

As children put the sheep in the pen, SING (to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell,” singing “(The)” on the upbeat):

The sheep are in the pen.
The sheep are in the pen.
(The) Shepherd will care for them.
The sheep are in the pen.

Bring out the Shepherd figure. SAY: Here is a good shepherd. I wonder why we call him a good shepherd instead of a bad shepherd? (He takes care of his sheep; if he was a bad shepherd, he would not.) How does the good shepherd take good care of the sheep? What is something that sheep need? (Food) What do sheep like to eat? (Grass)

Do you think there is grass to eat inside the sheep pen? (No, the shepherd has to take the sheep out of the pen to find grass.) A place with nice green grass for animals to eat is called a pasture. Move the shepherd to lead the sheep out of the pen to the grass. Have the shepherd call the name of each sheep. Jesus said that the good shepherd calls his sheep by name and they follow him.

As you are moving the sheep, SING (to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell”):

The sheep will go and eat.
The sheep will go and eat.
(The) Shepherd leads them out to eat.
The sheep will go and eat.

SAY: What do sheep need if they are thirsty? (Water) Where will they get water? Suggest silly possibilities. (No, the shepherd will have to lead them to a river or stream to drink.) Have the Shepherd call the names of the sheep and lead them from the pasture to the water.

As the sheep are moving, SING (to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell”):

The sheep will go and drink.
The sheep will go and drink.
(The) Shepherd leads them out to drink.
The sheep will go and drink.

Have the Wolf figure approach the sheep. SAY: Oh no, here comes a wolf! What do you think the wolf wants to do? (Eat the sheep.) The sheep are all running away to get away from the wolf. Scatter the sheep yourself.

What will the good shepherd do? Will he run away? (No) Have the good shepherd chase the wolf away.

Jesus says the good shepherd will not let the wolf get the sheep. He would even die before he would let the wolf get to the sheep, he loves them so. Lay the shepherd across the gate.

As you are moving the sheep, SING (to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell”):

The Shepherd keeps them safe.
The Shepherd keeps them safe.
He’d give His life for them.
The Shepherd keeps them safe.

Show the Thief figure, sneaking up to the sheep pen from the side. SAY: Who is this? Make the figure jump over the fence and approach the sheep. This man is going to try to steal some sheep! He is called a thief. A thief takes things from others that don’t belong to him. Will the sheep follow him? (The sheep don’t know the thief, so they won’t follow him.) Have the good shepherd chase the thief away. SAY: How do you think the sheep feel, knowing their good shepherd protected them from the thief? (Thankful and happy! They love him and want to only follow him.) SAY: Aren’t you glad that Jesus is your Good Shepherd?

Ring the bell and SAY: It’s time to move. Follow your Leaders.
Rotation Sites

1 hour
Early Childhood Teams get into three Rotation Groups. Each Rotation Group moves to their assigned Rotation Site. When it is time to move to a different Rotation Site, ring a bell three times.

Rotation 1: Bible Story Application

About 20 minutes

Review

You need: Lesson 1 Little Sprouts Early Childhood Leaflet and stickers, crayons

Give Lesson 1 Little Sprouts Early Childhood Leaflets to small-group Leaders. Sit at tables or on carpet squares in a circle on the floor. Make sure each child’s name gets on his or her leaflet. As you pass out each one, SAY: This is for Jesus’ little lamb (name of child). When all the leaflets are distributed, SAY: Can you point to your name? Who knows your name? Jesus, the Good Shepherd knows your name! You are one of His precious sheep.

SAY: Look at the picture. Do you think this is the city or the country? (The country) Do sheep live in the city or the country? (The country) I spy with my little eye something green that sheep like to eat. Can you point to it? (Yes, grass.) I spy with my little eye something blue that sheep like to drink. Can you point to it? (Yes, water.) I spy with my little eye someone who cares for sheep. What is he called? (Yes, the good shepherd.) Let’s look inside the leaflet.

Leaflet Activity

Pass out the stickers for Lesson 1.

SAY: Point to the drawing of the sheep. Who is with the sheep? (Yes, the good shepherd.) The good shepherd cares for the sheep. What is one way he cares for the sheep? He feeds them. Do you see a sticker with food that sheep like to eat? (Children point to the Grass Sticker). Yes, put the Grass Sticker on the top circle by the sheep, outlined in red.

What is another way the shepherd cares for the sheep? (He takes them to the water.) Do you see a sticker with the kind of water sheep like to drink? (Children point to the Pond Sticker). Let’s put the Pond Sticker on the blue circle under the Grass Sticker.

What if a bad wolf tries to chase the sheep or eat them? (The shepherd will protect the sheep.) Do you see the Wolf Sticker? (Children point to it).

I wonder why that red stripe is across the wolf? (It means no more wolf!) The shepherd will chase him away and bring the sheep back together. Put the Wolf Sticker on the green bottom circle by the sheep.

Now look at the other side of the page. Do you see the boy and girl? (Yes) Does the Good Shepherd care for boys and girls? (Yes) Who is the Good Shepherd? (Jesus!) Jesus cares for us, now and forever.

Look at the rest of the stickers. Which sticker shows that Jesus, our Good Shepherd, gives us food to eat? (Children point to the Plate of Food Sticker). Put the food sticker on the top red circle next to the boy and girl. Which sticker shows that Jesus provides water for us? (Children point to the Glass of Water Sticker). Put that sticker on the middle blue circle. What is the last sticker? (A cross) Remember how Jesus said the good shepherd would die for the sheep? Jesus died on the cross for us to take our sins away. Then He came alive again so we can live with Him forever. So we know that our Good Shepherd cares for us, now and forever! Put the Cross Sticker on the bottom circle.

Now use your crayons to finish coloring the scene. As the children work, compare the sheep’s food and water to the boy and girl’s food and water. Compare the wolf to our enemies. The good shepherd chases away wolves that would hurt his sheep. Our Good Shepherd, Jesus, protects us from death by giving His life for us. Let’s say our Take-Home Point again:

SAY: GATHER ‘ROUND! (Point up and circle hand.)
JESUS CARES! KIDS AND LEADERS: (Point up.)
JESUS CARES, (Circle hand.) NOW AND FOREVER!

SING (to the tune of “Bingo”):

I have a God who knows my name
And Jesus is His name. Yay! (Pump fist into the air.)
J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S,
And Jesus is His name. Yay! (Pump fist into the air.)

Or SING: “We Plow the Fields and Scatter” (Leader CD Track 19) as a thank-You song.
Rotation 2: Bible Challenge

About 20 minutes

The Bible Memory Song

You need: Bible with the Bible Memory Verse marked, Bible Memory Songs Sign Chart, Leader CD, and CD player

SAY: Our Bible Memory Verse is “The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want,” Psalm 23:1. Those words are from God’s book, the Bible. Let’s sing this Bible Memory Verse together. Play Leader CD Track 9. Add the motions as shown on the Bible Memory Songs Sign Chart, from the Leader CD.

Story Review

You need: large stick or cane to be a shepherd’s staff; bandana to put on the thief’s head

Choose one child to be a Wolf, one to be a Thief, and one to be a Good Shepherd. The rest will be Sheep. The first time through, if you have Helpers, they can take the parts of the Shepherd, Wolf, and Thief so the children see what to do.

To the Wolf, SAY: When it’s your turn, can you show me your meanest scariest wolf face and growl? To the Thief, SAY: When it’s your turn, try to get the Sheep to follow you instead of the Shepherd. The Shepherd will stand with his or her staff. While helping the Sheep to line up behind the Shepherd, SING (to the tune of “Ten Little Indians,” with the same syllable emphasis):

One little, two little, three little soft sheep.
Four little, five little, six little soft sheep.
Seven little, eight little, nine little soft sheep.
All sheep will follow Me. (“Round up” all the Sheep behind you.)

The Sheep follow the Shepherd while singing.

Our Shepherd leads all the sheep to the green grass.
Our Shepherd leads all the sheep to the water.
Our Shepherd gives all the sheep all that’s needed.
All sheep will follow Me.

The Wolf comes toward the Sheep and they scatter.

Wolves may come lurking around to attack sheep.
Wolves may come lurking around to attack sheep.
Wolves may come lurking around to attack sheep.
So they all run away.

The Shepherd scares the Wolf away, gathers the Sheep, and leads them back to the beginning.

Our Shepherd will give His life to protect them.
Our Shepherd will give His life to protect them.
Our Shepherd will give His life to protect them.
For He loves them so dear.

Now the Thief comes to beckon some of the Sheep to follow him. The Sheep go to the Shepherd instead.

Thieves try to sneak in the pen and snatch sheep up.
Thieves try to sneak in the pen and snatch sheep up.
Thieves try to sneak in the pen and snatch sheep up.
They’ll stay with the Shepherd.

Jesus said that He is our good, kind Shepherd.
Jesus said that He is our good, kind Shepherd.
Jesus said that He is our good, kind Shepherd.
We trust and love Him so!

As time allows, allow other children to play the lead parts.

SAY: GATHER ‘ROUND! (Point up and circle hand.) JESUS CARES! KIDS AND LEADERS: (Point up) JESUS CARES, (Circle hand.) NOW AND FOREVER! Now let’s do it again in a whisper voice. (Repeat Take-Home Point.) Now let’s do it in our loudest voice. (Repeat Take-Home Point.)
Rotation 3: Crafts  
-about 20 minutes

Psalm 23 Frame

You Need
- Psalm 23 Frame, 1 per person
- Fine-point permanent markers
- Glue
- Photo or colored picture (optional)
- Smocks (optional)
- Newspaper or disposable plastic tablecloth
- Tape
- Finished sample craft

Make It!

Gather needed materials. Write each child’s name on the back of his or her frame. Cover the workspace surface with newspaper or a plastic tablecloth and tape down. Show children the supplies and markers. Help and encourage the children as needed.

Children use markers to color the frame. Closely supervise the children’s use of the permanent markers. If desired, have the children wear smocks (or large shirts) to protect clothing.

Help children remove the Psalm 23 die-cut shapes from the frame.

Help children glue the shapes to the frame.

Help children glue a photo or a picture they have colored to the middle of the frame.

Putting It All Together

Welcome kids as they arrive. Introduce yourself and any volunteers working in your area.

Say: GATHER ‘ROUND! (Point up and circle hand.)
Jesus cares! Kids and Leaders: (Point up.)
Jesus cares, (Circle hand.) now and forever!

Say: Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He calls us by name in Baptism, and through His Word He invites us to follow Him. He takes care of us and provides for all our needs, now and forever.

As you work on your Psalm 23 Frame, think about the words of Psalm 23 and what they mean for your life. How has Jesus taken care of you this past week? Did you have food to eat? a place to sleep? Thank Him for these blessings. What worries or troubles do you have? Is a friend being mean to you? Are you worried about something you did that was wrong? Is someone you love sick?

Remember, you are not alone. Jesus, your Good Shepherd, cares for you, now and forever! He gives you what you need to live. He forgives your sins and protects you from your enemies: sin, death, and the devil.

You can talk to Him about everything and trust Him to answer in a way that is best. You can listen to His voice as He talks to you in His Word. Through God’s Word, He gives you strength and peace. Through God’s Word, you’ll know He loves you. It’s a love so big that He laid down His life for you so you could have life everlasting with Him. You’ll live with Him forever!

Share the “Make It!” instructions and any additional instructions with the students. Point out the supplies on each table, and let the kids create. Craft Leaders and Early Childhood Leaders help and encourage individuals as needed.

Note: The die-cut shapes have numerals by them indicating the order of the text. Do not expect young children to put the text of Psalm 23 in order. Also, note that not all of the text of Psalm 23 is included on the shapes, but all five Bible Memory Verses are referenced.
Snack

20 minutes

Follow the Flock

You Need

■ A plate for each child
■ A wooden craft stick and toothpick for each child
■ 7 small cauliflower florets for each child
■ 2 black olives for each child
■ Assorted vegetables to serve on the side, such as carrot sticks, cucumber slices, cherry tomatoes, and bell pepper slices
■ Ranch dressing or veggie dip
■ A small cup with dip for each child
■ A finished example
■ Hand sanitizer & napkins
■ Cups & water

Advance Preparation

Clean and dry the vegetables. Cut cauliflower into small florets. Each child needs seven florets. For each child, cut one black olive into one small piece for an ear and four long pieces for legs. Cut and prepare other vegetables, such as carrot sticks and cucumber slices, if desired. Before the session, put items listed above on the table(s).

When Kids Arrive

Take the children to the restroom. Have them wash their hands. Have them sit in their places.

SAY: Let’s make a snack to help us remember Jesus cares. Let’s say the Bible verse: “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.” Psalm 23:1. Sheep follow their shepherd. Did you know sheep stick together? They like to stay in a large group—a flock—and follow one another. Sticking together helps protect sheep from their enemies. Sheep want to follow a friendly person who will protect them and lead them to food and water. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, takes care of us and protects us from sin and the devil. Jesus cares, now and forever!

Making the Snack

SAY: To help you remember that Jesus cares for you, we’re making a snack that looks like a sheep. Show a finished example. Point to each section of the sheep as you explain:

■ Use the white cauliflower to make the sheep’s body. Put the pieces in an oval shape in the middle of your plate.
■ Place a big black olive on one side to be the sheep’s face. Set a small piece of black olive on the head to be an ear.
■ Place the four long pieces of black olive on the bottom of the sheep for its legs.
■ Dip a toothpick into the dressing and draw an eye on your sheep’s face.
■ Make a pasture by putting green vegetables around the plate. Make flowers by adding tomatoes or red peppers.

After explaining the snack to the children, demonstrate step-by-step again. Work together as a class, one step at a time, until each child has completed the same step, and then go on at the same time.

SAY: Now dip your veggies in the dressing and enjoy. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, cares for us by providing this healthy food. Say a snack prayer and eat.

Before They Go

SAY: GATHER ’ROUND! (Point up and circle hand.) JESUS CARES! KIDS AND LEADERS: (Point up.) JESUS CARES, (Circle hand.) NOW AND FOREVER! SAY: Today, you learned how sheep like to stay together. And you learned more about Jesus, our Good Shepherd, who gathers us together and takes care of us.
Games

20 minutes

Sheep Herding

You Need

■ 6 white balloons and lots of extras (They’ll pop!)  
  (optional: permanent marker, curly ribbon, tape)
■ 4 long-handed flyswatters
■ 8 hay bales or cones

Get Ready

To prepare for this relay, blow up white balloons to be the sheep. Give them faces and wool marks with permanent markers, or tape on curly ribbon for tails. Have extra balloons ready for those that pop. Set up two cones or hay bales for each line, one at the start, and one about ten feet away, in front of the line.

Here We Go

SAY: Welcome to Bales of Fun Games! We are glad to have you here with us, learning how Jesus gathers us together. In today’s Bible story, we are talking about Jesus, our Good Shepherd. How do shepherds take care of their sheep? (They lead their sheep to food and water and protect them from danger.) Shepherds care for their sheep, and Jesus cares for us!

SAY: GATHER ‘ROUND! (Point up and circle hand.)
JESUS CARES! KIDS AND LEADERS: (Point up.)
JESUS CARES, (Circle hand.) NOW AND FOREVER!

Divide the kids into four teams and have each team line up behind a hay bale (cone).

SAY: Sheep are not good listeners. Sometimes they walk away from their shepherd and try to go their own way. We need to keep these sheep together as a flock. Can you pretend to be a shepherd and herd a sheep? A sheep wants to get away, but you need to be a shepherd and guide the sheep back to its pen.

Demonstrate the relay as you explain each step. When I say, “Go!” the first person will use this sheep herding tool (fly swatter) to guide the sheep (white balloon). The sheep is getting away, so you need to gently push the sheep down to the hay bale (cone), go around and behind it, and then come back to the front of the line, the same place you started from.

Then it will be someone else’s turn to go. Hand the herding tool to the next person in line so he or she can train to be a shepherd. Then go to the end of the line and sit down.

Answer any questions, and then complete the relay. Keep the extra balloons nearby to replace balloons that pop. When finished, have the students sit together with their team. SAY: Did the sheep always go the direction you wanted them to go? Was it frustrating? (Let students answer.) Jesus tells us that His sheep know His voice and listen. Sometimes we listen to our Good Shepherd and go where He leads, and sometimes we don’t. But Jesus always loves us and cares for us, and He leads us to everlasting life with Him.

Fun in the Play Yard

If your Games time is in a play yard, consider using activities from the Learning Area too. Caring for Sheep is a possibility.

Or play Barnyard Mix-up. In advance, mark your playing area with cones so the children know the boundaries. No other materials are needed.

Explain that you will tell the children to pretend to be an animal. You will whisper the name of the animal in their ear. When you say “Go!” they will start acting like the animal by making that animal’s noise and by moving like that animal. Their job is to find all the other animals that are the same, and stand together as a group, or herd. The game is over when all of the mixed up animals are sorted into groups.

Start by assigning only two animals, but work up to three or four. Possible animal options include cows, horses, pigs, chickens, sheep, roosters, cats, dogs, and mice. After the game, SAY: Sometimes we are mixed up and go the wrong way. But Jesus loves us and gathers us together!
Closing

-about 15 minutes

Closing Puppet Skit

You need: Polly the Pig Puppet, Puppet Script, Lesson 1 Little Sprouts Early Childhood Leaflet, Lesson 1 My Shepherd Collectible, and children’s take-home items

Seat the children on the floor or carpet squares. SING: “My Shepherd” (Leader CD Track 17). Bring out the Polly the Pig Puppet to talk about how we can tell Jesus cares for us. Use the Puppet Script from the Leader CD.

After the skit, close with this echo prayer: Dear Jesus, / thank You for being with us / at Barnyard Roundup today. / Thank You / that You care for us now / and forever. / Help us trust You always. / In Your name we pray. Amen.

SAY: Let’s meet again at Barnyard Roundup! Next time, we’ll hear how Jesus took care of a lot of people. It’s great to know He provides for our needs—what we need to live here on earth, and what we need so we’ll live forever with Jesus. SAY: GATHER ’ROUND! (Point up and circle hand.) JESUS CARES! KIDS AND LEADERS: (Point up.) JESUS CARES, (Circle hand.) NOW AND FOREVER! Now let’s do it again in a whisper voice. (Repeat Take-Home Point.) Now let’s do it in our loudest voice. (Repeat Take-Home Point.)

Show a Lesson 1 lesson leaflet. SAY: Please take this home and ask your Mom or Dad to read it. There is something special on the front and back pages for your family to do together.

Thank your Helpers. Send home Lesson 1 Little Sprouts Early Childhood Leaflet, the Lesson 1 My Shepherd Collectible, and other take-home items. As you say good-bye to children at sign-out time, remind parents to read the leaflet at home.

Looking Ahead

Pray for your students and Helpers.

Restock or prepare learning areas with Lesson 2 materials.

Lay out Poster Fun from Little Sprouts Early Childhood Leaflets for the next lesson’s transition activity.

Prepare the Storytelling materials.

Review the next lesson’s plans. Ask your team members what adjustments might improve the schedule or activities.