

# SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

## Our Trustworthy Shepherd

Week of 8.12.2019

### *Psalm 23*

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

*He makes me lie down in green pastures.*

*He leads me beside still waters.*

*He restores my soul.*

*He leads me in paths of righteousness*

*for his name's sake.*

*Even 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.*

*You prepare a table before me*

*in the presence of my enemies;*

*you anoint my head with oil;*

*my cup overflows.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me*

*all the days of my life,*

*and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord*

*forever.*

This psalm of David is about radical trust and contentment. In it, God is compared to a shepherd, which was a metaphor frequently applied to kings and leaders in the ancient Near East. While earthly leaders like these may or may not be good and trustworthy, the psalmist gives three reasons why we can always trust God: He gives us what we truly need, He is with us even in our darkest hours with guidance and comfort, and He welcomes us to His royal banquet table as a guest in His house.

- Do you feel like it's difficult for you to trust God sometimes? Why do you think that is?
- During the sermon, Kati told a story about a time when her family had a financial need, and God showed His care through one of His people, who anonymously left for them

exactly the amount of money that they needed. Can you think of a time in your life when you were in some kind of need, and you didn't know how you were going to make it, but God came through for you?

- One reason people might have a hard time trusting God our King is because of bad examples they've seen in selfish earthly leaders. But we can demonstrate trust in God for our own provision and proclaim His goodness to others when we are generous with them, whether we're leaders or not. What can you do this week to benefit someone else by using your material resources, your time, your effort, or whatever power you have?
- The first chapter of the book of Matthew identifies Jesus with a term from the book of Isaiah, Immanuel, which means "God with us." At the end of Matthew, Jesus tells his disciples, "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Why do you think the writer of Matthew chose to include these words about God being present with us through Christ? How does reflecting on God's presence with us affect the way you experience times of fear and hardship? How does it affect the way you experience other times in your life?