

# The Lord is my shepherd

## A Service for Safeguarding Sunday 2022

### WELCOME

#### Leader:

Welcome to our Safeguarding Sunday service as we look at the theme of 'Caring'.

We belong to a congregation, we belong to a community as a family, and like any other family, we look after each other and support one another. That is why it's so essential for us to care for, and safeguard our members – from the youngest to the oldest.

In our service today, we will be taking the opportunity to thank those who care for us and for those who work with children and vulnerable adults in our churches and communities. We also want to hold in our hearts those who have been hurt or harmed by our actions or by our lack of action.

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Let's praise God, our caring Father

#### Psalm 34

- <sup>1</sup> I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.
- <sup>2</sup> I will glory in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.
- <sup>3</sup> Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together.
- <sup>4</sup> I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.
- <sup>5</sup> Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.
- <sup>6</sup> This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles.
- <sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.
- <sup>8</sup> Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

### EMYN 1

Praise my soul, the King of Heaven (H. F Lyte 1793-1847)

Come, now is the time to worship ((Brian Doerskson)

O Christ the King of Glory who chose the way of loss (From 1 Peter 1 Timothy Dudley Smith ©1992)

Strength will rise (Chris Tomlin)

### PRAYER

Gracious Lord, thank You for all your care for us and for all the blessings we receive from You.

Thank You for your faithfulness and love towards us.

You know about every breath that we take and every beat of our hearts.

You know about all our hopes and desires.

You know about our every thought.

'You know when I sit down or stand up.

You know my thoughts even when I'm far away.

You see me when I travel and when I rest at home.

You know everything I do.

You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord.

You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand!

You know every thing about me, and You still love me.

Thank You, Lord. Amen

## READING

**Leader:** One of the most beautiful images of God's care for us is very familiar to us. Let us read Psalm 23 together.

**Leader:** This is how the New Living Translation of the Bible presents the first verse:

"The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need."

This is the picture of the perfect shepherd who is so careful of his flock. This is God's provision for all our needs. The two greatest needs of a sheep are water and good pasture, and in the psalm we hear of 'green pastures' and 'quiet waters'.

Close your eyes for a minute and try to imagine being in such a lovely place. In a place where you have need of nothing.

## HYMN 2

The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want ( Francis Rous (1579-1659)

The Lord's my shepherd - and I will trust in you alone (Psalm 23 adapted by Stuart Townend 1996 thankyou music)

What a friend we have in Jesus ( Joseph Scriven 1819-86)

## SAFEGUARDING FILM<sup>ii</sup>

**Leader:** One of the teachers of the law asked Jesus, "<sup>36</sup> 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?'

<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'" <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself.'" (Mathew 22:36- 39)

In this short film by the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel, we hear about our responsibility to care for, and to safeguard others, especially those who are vulnerable – our neighbours, both children and adults.

**Show the film** (see endnotes <sup>ii</sup> and <sup>iii</sup>)

## SHORT ADDRESS/ MEDITATION

**Leader:** The shepherd cares for his sheep daily, all year round. We're reminded of another Psalm about God's care and help, help that's available every day and night:

### Psalm 121

- <sup>3</sup>He will not let your foot slip – he who watches over you will not slumber;
- <sup>4</sup> indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
- <sup>5</sup> The LORD watches over you – the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
- <sup>6</sup> the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.
- <sup>7</sup> The LORD will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life;
- <sup>8</sup> the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and for evermore.

Not only do the sheep need water and food, they also need to be kept safe. In Psalm 23 we have a clear picture of the shepherd leading his sheep through a dangerous valley. The sheep are safe because the shepherd defends them every step of the way, and after coming through the difficult and unpleasant experience they come to a place of restoration, where a feast has been prepared. This is God's care for us. He sent His Son to be our Good Shepherd: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." (John 10:11)

As we heard in the verses from Mathew, the commandment that we received from the Good Shepherd was to love our neighbour as ourselves. As human beings, our instinct to survive dictates that we safeguard ourselves, but here we are reminded that we are to show the same care towards others – towards our neighbour. Care for others has certainly been one of the characteristics of the church of Jesus from the very beginning.

We are thankful for all the love and care shown in our churches, in the big things as in the small. In the Book of Acts chapter six, we hear of the need to appoint those to care for the widows. 'They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism.

<sup>6</sup> They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.' (Acts 6: 5,6)

Today we have the opportunity to thank the people who work quietly, often in the background, to ensure that we have a safe place to meet, and for those who organise appropriate care for our children, young people and the vulnerable in our midst.

#### **PRAYER:**

Thank you, Lord, for the people who work quietly to ensure that so many things have been done so that we can meet here today to worship you together safely. Thank you for the leaders of this church who do so much. Thank you for the care and kindness shown amongst members of the church, and to the surrounding community. Thank You for those who care for and work with youth and children, and for those who are responsible for the safety of the building. Help us to reflect the love and care that you have for us. Lord, we know that defending the vulnerable is at the root of the Christian message. Today, we lift the vulnerable to you, those who need protection, and those who are fearful, who have been injured and hurt. Protect them, comfort them and give them your peace. AMEN.

#### **HYMN 3:**

What a friend we have in Jesus (Joseph Scriven 1819-86)

Amazing Grace – how sweet the sound (John Newton 1725-1807)

My Jesus, my Saviour (Daniel Jacobi / Darlene Zschech / P. Eltermann)

#### **OUR CARING ROLE**

**Leader:** Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility– 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' When we see someone who is vulnerable, defenceless, weak, let us imagine ourselves in their situation and think how we would feel.

How would we like someone to show care and kindness to us if we were in their place?

Jesus says in Matthew "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."(Matthew 25: 40)

#### **PRAYER:**

Dear Lord, We're sorry that we do not always show love and care as we should, that we don't always notice the needs of those around us. Please help us to be genuine in our care. Please help us to do everything that is necessary to ensure that our church is a safe and welcoming to everyone, especially to those who are vulnerable in any way. If there are places where our care is lacking, show us, and give us strength and enthusiasm to improve the situation.

We pray for those in our society who have suffered in any way because of poor care. We pray for the elderly, for youth and children and for those in need. We pray for those who have been mistreated and abused . We ask you, Lord, to be close to those who need to be protected and to those who are fearful, who have been hurt or injured.

Good Shepherd, protect them, comfort them and give them your peace. AMEN

#### **HYMN 4:**

Make me a channel of your peace (Francis of Assisi 1181?-1226 adapted Sebastian Temple 1928-97 )

#### **CLOSE:**

Thank you for joining with us today in our Safeguarding Sunday Service. It's good to spend some time together to think and meditate on this important topic. It's something we can't ignore as a church and we are grateful that we don't have to do this on our own and that the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel<sup>iv</sup> is there to help and support us with any safeguarding matters and training. As we close our Safeguarding Service, we wanted to take this opportunity to raise

awareness of the panel and the service and support that it offers. Any one, members and leaders can get in touch with the panel and you can find their contact details on our safeguarding poster or on the panel website at [panel.cymru](http://panel.cymru).

Let us end our service today by saying the words of the Grace to each other

**All :** May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen

Prepared by Nia Williams, Pwllheli

## Notes

i This service can be led by one person but would also work well with a number of people taking part and reading the prayers and hymns, and the leader's part and readings can also be shared.

If you would like to include some child friendly elements in your service we recommend that you visit [Safeguarding Sunday | Thirtyone:eight \(thirtyoneeight.org\)](http://Safeguarding Sunday | Thirtyone:eight (thirtyoneeight.org)) where you can access a wider range of resources and further ideas for safeguarding Sunday

ii **FILM** To receive the link to download the 3½ minute film send an email to [post@panel.cymru](mailto:post@panel.cymru)

We encourage you to make every effort to show the film as it is an effective and concise way of sharing the message. However, we do appreciate that some churches may not have the facilities to show the film during a service.

As an alternative it may be helpful to read the film script which is included below at iii

iii **Safeguarding Film Script:**

There is a strong sense of belonging that exists within churches – and maybe during these turbulent times of pandemic we have put that sense of belonging to the test more than ever before.

We all belong to a congregation, we belong to a denomination and we belong to our community, like a family. This sense of belonging is so important. And like any other family, we look after and support each other too.

This is why ensuring the safety, care and protection of our members is essential – from the youngest to the oldest.

In Wales, the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel has created simple and practical safeguarding guidelines for us to follow within our churches in the form of an easy to use handbook and clear training that's easy to follow. Each one of us should take the matter of safeguarding seriously.

We hear terrible stories about the abuse and ill-treatment of people in the news these days, and often, we think quietly to ourselves: 'That kind of thing wouldn't happen to us.' But the truth is that bad things can happen. So safeguarding is relevant to all of us, as individuals and as churches, and it is the duty of each member of the church community to ensure the safety and protection of everybody, from children to vulnerable adults. We come together as churches – a collection of individuals of all ages, from all backgrounds and all kinds of experiences – we must be caring towards each other, and towards everybody.

Through the training, we learn how to make our churches safer places for all. Training can help us be confident that we are doing our part to care for and protect our children, young people and vulnerable adults as well as workers and volunteers.

The training teaches us how to notice things that could be signs of something more worrying, it teaches us how to listen to what children and vulnerable people are saying, the training also teaches us how to respond with confidence, in positive and sensitive ways.

Safeguarding is relevant to each and every one of us, as Christians we can't afford not to take it seriously.

iv **The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel** was established in 2001 to support and advise the churches of the Union of Welsh Independents, Baptist Union of Wales and the Presbyterian Church of Wales concerning safeguarding practice relating to their work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. For more information on safeguarding matters, safeguarding training or DBS forms, contact the Panel's office: [post@panel.cymru](mailto:post@panel.cymru) 01745 817584 or visit the website <https://panel.cymru>