

Dear Family,

GOOD NEWS! In keeping with our governors guidelines we will be allowing worshipers into the sanctuary this Sunday, May 10, with some **strict guidelines** which will be sent out by the church council. Online and parking lot worship continue, of course.

Here' some helps along the way to live out the Gospel Lesson and sermon from Sunday:

1. Please pray and ask God to place His words into your heart , *then*, reread John 10;1-10.
2. This text follows the story of Jesus healing the man born blind and getting hassled by the Jewish leadership for it!! So Jesus uses these shepherd illustrations to contrast bad shepherds (the Jewish leadership) with Himself, the Good Shepherd. In our lives and culture there are, as always lots of bad shepherds, TV evangelists (there are some honest ones though:) who live in palatial mansions, drive luxury cars, and lavish the funds people give to their TV ministries for personal gain -- these are the bad shepherds of our day. Stick with evangelists who live Godly and simple lives while giving their funds to serve the poor not themselves.
3. A Good Shepherd cares so much for his sheep that they come to understand this and FOLLOW him. We would do well to do the same!. Lets not chase after worldly distractions that cannot give us everlasting live --eternal "pasture", but follow HIM, Jesus our Good Shepherd.
4. The Good Shepherd knows his sheep intimately because he LIVES with them and they, gladly, live with him. Let's do the same! Carry on a conversation with the Lord all day, just as you would any loving companion. Then you will know His voice when you're in trouble and seek Him. He will call you by name as well, in that He will come to you and minister to your needs. In the text, Jesus says the Good shepherd is the "door" that's because in Biblical times, when shepherds out "out in the wild" with their flock they create a safe enclosure of briars and thorns, then lay down in the opening at night so NO HARM can come to his sheep. He literally "lays down his life for them" as he becomes that door.
5. **If ever we needed a Good Shepherd, it is NOW, right?!** As the Good Shepherd who becomes that "door" to the sheep pen, so we can rest assured that NOTHING can "get into" our lives that has not first passed through him. He has our eternal good in mind at all times, especially now.

May the Lord bless, keep, and protect each and every one of you this week! Don;t forget to invite a friend to "tune in " with you or on their own, online this Sunday -- Mothers Day!!!!

Pastor

Rev. Michael W. Birnbaum