

The Lord is My ...

(PSALM 23)

Psalms 23 is one of the most well-known Bible passages. Many of us can recite this psalm from memory, without even batting an eye or thinking about it. Sometimes, when we have heard a Scripture verse so often, it may lose its impact, as we mindlessly say the passage from memory.

However, let's look at this psalm from a new perspective. Now, this passage uses a literary device called a metaphor. Many of us remember from grade school, metaphors simply compare similar things. They can compare pretty much anything, for example: your 2nd period class and watching paint dry. Or let's say Buehler's before Thanksgiving and a stampede of elephants. Metaphors help us to describe and understand our world better. They help us to make correlations about our lives.

Now, in this psalm, if God is the Shepherd, then that would make us, sheep. I do not know about you, but of all the creatures in the animal kingdom, being likened to a livestock animal would not be my first choice of comparison. Sheep are "not the brightest crayons in the box." They are dim-witted, and as herding animals, they pretty much follow the crowd. They also do not have any defense mechanisms for protecting themselves from predators. At the least bit, I think we could agree that the sheep and people comparison is not the most flattering correlation for us.

He leads.
He cares.
He provides.
He is my Shepherd.



Psalm 23



St. John's

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

409 North Wooster Avenue
Dover, OH 44622



Sunday Morning Schedule
10:30 AM Worship



Rev. Dr. Cassandra Granados
Senior Minister



Natalie Peterman
Pastor of Congregational Life



Emaly Smallcombe
Administrative Assistant



Church Office Hours

Monday-Friday 9 AM - 3 PM

330-364-4458

Fax: 330-364-4459

Website: <http://doverstjohns.org>



E-mail Addresses:

natalie@doverstjohns.org

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A Shepherd FOR OUR LIVES



The question could be raised, "Of all the images, why would the Psalmist use the image of a Shepherd and sheep?" Well, I do not exactly know; however, what I do know is that shepherding was a well-known profession in ancient Palestine. Sheep herding would have been a common experience that many people could relate to. So, basically, the Psalmist took a common image that everyone could relate to and compared it to their understanding of who God was. For many of us today, caring for sheep is not a common practice that we have experienced.

But, if we were to take these 6 verses and look past being compared to as foolish sheep, we would see the heartbeat of this psalm in three simple words: "**The Lord is.**" If we were to take the psalm and sum it up, the passage is trying to express who God is. For this Psalmist, God is a caring Shepherd, who is a provider, protector, and generous giver.

But, who is God to us? If we were to describe God, what does God look like? How would God act? If we were to write our own Psalm 23, how would it go? Well, there is no right answer to that question. The beauty of God is in the eye of the beholder, and depending on our life experiences, God looks different to all of us.

Known ~ Guided ~ Loved

Who is God to You?

SAME GOD. DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES. A FAITH FOR EVERY SEASON.



His plan.
Your story.

For Nick, a seventh grader, who loves to play baseball. He sees God as a coach. He rewrote Psalm 23, to describe who God is to him. Nick writes,



"The Lord is my coach; I will not let down.
He supplies me with water after the game;
He leads me down the home stretch. He helps me.
He leads me through the basics and the rules
of the game.
Even though I walk up to the plate of the wild
pitcher, I will fear nothing.
I am being watched over and taken care of.
My bat and my helmet, they comfort me.
He gives me a strategy to follow.
He fills me with plans and ideas. My fear is gone.
My coach loves me and cares for me like a father,
and I shall dwell in the dugout of the Lord, forever."



Different
Seasons.
Same God.

What does God look like to you? Only you can answer that question. You may say, "The Lord is my Friend. The Lord is my loving Parent. The Lord is my Coach. The Lord is my teacher." I challenge you today to write your own version of Psalm 23 and describe who God is to you. It does not have to be super fancy or follow the original psalm perfectly. Just write from your heart.



New
Classes.
Same
God.

In honor of school starting back, I have re-written Psalm 23 for today's students.

God is my ultimate guide; I need nothing else.
Forget, ChatGPT and Google!



At night, even though I am an anxious girlie,
I lay down and chill. God leads me to chill vibes
through prayer and mindfulness. I feel refreshed.

God guides me down the hall to my classes and
guides me to make good decisions. Even though
I go through the toughest times, through peer-pressure
and teasing I will fear no mean girl or bully, for God
is with me. My fidgets and phone, they comfort me.

In the cafeteria, you prepare a table before me
in the presence of my haters. You prepare me and
guard my heart; my cup overflows with my favorite
Frappuccino.

Surely, God's blessings and love will follow me
all my school days, and I will have God guide me forever.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Cassandra



October ANNIVERSARIES

CELEBRATING GOD'S GIFT OF LOVE

Two
Are
Better
Than One.

ECCLESIASTES 4:9

♥	John and Kathy Deitrick	10/4	40 years
♥	Michael and Lori Phillips	10/8	32 years
♥	Dale and Lee Ann Miller	10/10	34 years
♥	David and Paula Sickinger	10/11	40 years
♥	Daniel and Elizabeth Sickinger	10/14	9 years

A LITTLE ADVICE FOR A LASTING MARRIAGE...

"Learn to master the delicate art
of secretly adjusting the thermostat
by one degree."

- Paula

Grateful
for
Love



October
BIRTHDAYS

Celebrating our Church Family

May your day be filled with God's love, joy and many blessings!

Happy Birthday!

Wishing all of our October birthdays a year filled with God's blessings!

Christina Armstrong 10/1	Amanda Burdette 10/13	Melissa Poland 10/22
Tiffany Bowman 10/1	Aidan Drobney 10/13	Stephanie Bingle 10/24
Shelly Beitzel 10/2	Teresa Wright 10/13	Kimberly Nagy 10/24
Trevor Klar 10/2	Marvin Croy 10/14	Mary Jo Jones 10/25
Kasey Bassett 10/3	Judy Engelhard 10/14	Debra Haglock 10/26
Linda Keller 10/3	Tucker McCabe 10/14	Jon McDonald 10/27
Daniel Minnis 10/3	Ryan McGinnis 10/14	Dave McGrath 10/28
Betty Davidson 10/4	Daniel Vance 10/14	John Wright 10/28
Steven Frum 10/4	Joyce Dummermuth 10/15	Michele Clinton 10/29
Lori Warner 10/4	Amy Felgenhauer 10/15	Nancy Coutts 10/29
Marilyn Brown 10/5	Camryn Hurst 10/15	Spencer Edie 10/29
Elle Hall 10/5	Adam Whitlach 10/15	Mitch Keener 10/29
Grant Gonter 10/6	James Cua 10/16	Dan Swonger 10/29
Richard Jenkins 10/6	Amy Weber 10/16	Doug Wood 10/29
Marcia Lukens 10/6	Andrew McMillan 10/17	Carol McCutcheon 10/30
David Snyder 10/6	Garret Davis 10/18	Ethan Miller 10/30
Jeff Giannobile 10/8	Wilda Jones 10/18	Constance Eckhardt 10/31
Jeff Shreiner 10/11	David Sickinger 10/18	Kevin Kelley 10/31
Annette Jones 10/12	Jim Cotton 10/20	Judy Menges 10/31
Susan Rice 10/12	Matthew Berens 10/21	Patrick Mercer 10/31
Margy Wherley 10/12	Zayn McCulloch 10/21	Thomas Pongrantz 10/31
	Beth Swegheimer 10/21	

St. John's United Church of Christ

Council Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2026 • 7:30 PM

President Dave Gingrich called the meeting to order and lit the Christ Candle at 7:30 P.M. with 15 members present.

Rev. Cassandra Granados gave the opening prayer.

The minutes were reviewed and approved as presented.

Adam Herman gave the Treasurer's Report:

- General income for the month was \$36,587
- Expenses for the month were \$36,547
- Resulting in a gain of \$14,547

M/S/C by Sue Ferbrache and Bev Smith to approve the finance report.

Pastor Cassandra reported the following:

- Attended Natalie Peterman's interview with Living Water Assoc's Committee on ministry, requesting her licensing credentials.
 - Blessings of the backpacks during worship on August 30th.
 - Pulpit Supply pastors have been secured during Cassandra's maternity leave to deliver the sermon and coordinate the services with Natalie. Bulletin templates with hymns selected have also been prepared while she will be away.
 - Natalie Peterman's Installation Service will be held on September 27th during worship.
-

Natalie Peterman reported on the following:

- Natalie has completed convergence classes, met with the Committee on Ministry and her licensure has been approved. Her installation is scheduled for September 27th.
 - Youth & Family programming and Follow Me leadership schedule has been finalized with CE Board members leading the lessons.
 - Youth activities will begin on September 27th.
 - Team Spirit Sunday is scheduled for October 4th with members encouraged to wear jerseys for their favorite teams.
 - The Parish Visitation Ministry continues to be strong with volunteers & staff supporting members through visits, cards, phone calls and text check-ins. There are currently 24 households on the care list. Please let the church office know anyone who should be added to the list.
 - Bible Study resumed on September 1st with the next meeting at 11:30 on September 15th at Magic Mugs. The group plans to meet on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays each month.
 - Scheduling has begun for the Advent Lantern and Candle Lighting program which includes youth & new members/confirmands visiting long-time members and church groups to bring the light into the service for the weeks of Advent.
-

Sue Ferbrache reported for the Elders:

- Plans for the Praise in the Park service on September 20th were reviewed. The outdoor service will be held in one of the shelters at Deis Hill Park at 10:30am. In case of inclement weather, the service will be moved back to the church.
- There will be a celebration in the Fellowship Center after church on September 27th in honor of Natalie's installation. Beverages and cookies will be served.
- A calendar of events at St. John's has been prepared by the staff and reviewed by the Elders. The schedule goes through May 2027 and will be continually updated for new activities in the life of St. John's.
- The Elders have been discussing security plans for Sunday worship and will seek input from the Living Water Association and other local sources.

Dan Dummermuth reported for the Trustees:

- The first pews on each side of the sanctuary have been removed and carpet filled in to match the existing flooring. The pews have been relocated to the worship area at Fourth & Faith. A big thank you to all who helped, including some of our own congregation and several members of the Dover football team.
- The church office has been repainted by Ben Hughes and the decor updated to modernize the look of the office.
- Several projects are being reviewed, including new rain gutters & downspouts for the rental garage behind the CE building, roof repairs at Fourth & Faith and plaster repair/painting of the youth room in the sanctuary building.
- A new remote entry system has been installed for the Cloister and Front entry doors of the CE Building. The new system will allow for better security of persons being admitted into the buildings.

Bev Smith reported for the Deacons:

- Ushers are secured for the month of October.
- Planning for the Holiday Craft Show is progressing well, with 24 craft vendors signed up so far and volunteers for bake sale being lined up. The events will be held Saturday, November 7th from 10am – 3pm at Fourth & Faith. Donations of baked goods can be delivered on Friday, November 6th from 9am – 7pm.

Upcoming Congregational Activities include:

- **Card Party at Fourth & Faith** – Sept 9th (2nd Wed monthly) – *benefit Cancer Bags*
- **Chair Yoga** – Sept 10th (10am Mon/Thur at Fourth & Faith)
- **Chancel Choir resumes in worship** – Sept 13th (practice weekly Wed evening)
- **Bad Girls Book Club** – Sept 14th (6:30pm on 2nd Monday monthly)
- **Needles & Hookers** – Sept 14th (weekly on Monday at 2pm)
- **Bible Study** – Sept 15th at Fourth & Faith (1st & 3rd Tue 11:30am at Magic Mugs)
- **Praise in the Park at Deis Hill Park** – Sept 20th
- **Installation Service for Natalie** – Sept 27th during worship with reception following
- **Team Spirit Sunday** – Oct 4th
- **Craft Show & Bake Sale** – Nov 7th – *benefit Blessing Box*

Unfinished Business – none

New Business – none

The meeting adjourned at 8:10pm with the Lord's Prayer.



FROM THE PASTOR'S *Office* CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

A Season of *Harvest* and Hope

October brings us into the harvest season, cooler days, changing leaves and fields that remind us of the quiet work that happens before anything is ready to be gathered.



*"So let us not grow weary in doing what is right,
for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up."*
Galatians 6:9

The story of Ruth is a beautiful picture of faithfulness during a season of uncertainty. Ruth entered the fields carrying grief and loss, yet she continued taking the next faithful step. In those fields, she found kindness, provision and hope for a future she could not yet see.

Sometimes our lives of faith look much the same. We pray, serve, encourage and care for one another without always knowing what will grow from it. But every act of love plants something.

We begin October with **Team Sunday on October 4th**. Wear your favorite sports shirt or jersey as we celebrate the reminder that, just like a team, each person has a part to play. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12:12 that although we are many, we are one body. We each bring different gifts, personalities and abilities, but together we are the church.

Then on **October 18th**, we will observe **Hope Sunday**, creating space for suicide awareness, compassion and the important reminder that no one should have to carry their struggles alone. Together we can be a community that listens, supports and offers hope.

As we move through this season, may we notice the growth happening around us, give thanks for the harvest already visible and keep faithfully planting seeds of kindness, hope and love.

Blessings,
Pastor Natalie
Pastor of Congregational Life

October at a Glance



TEAM SUNDAY OCTOBER 4TH

Wear your favorite sports shirt or jersey!

"Though many, we are one body."
1 Corinthians 12:12



HOPE SUNDAY OCTOBER 18TH

A Sunday of hope and to raise awareness.



*You are seen.
You are valued.
You are not alone.*



FAITH • COMMUNITY • HOPE
ALWAYS



THE 9TH ANNUAL HOPE SUNDAY 2026

Together, Tuscarawas & Carroll County churches will bring **HOPE** to our communities.

*Stronger
Together
for a Brighter
Tomorrow*

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
— Jeremiah 29:11

PEOPLE + CHURCHES + COMMUNITIES = **HOPE**

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYER FOR: Sunday, October 18th



Youth and families — Pray for young people as they navigate social media, technology, peer pressure, and the challenges of growing up. May they know their worth and feel supported by the adults around them.



Cyber safety — Pray for wisdom and discernment as children and teens use technology and social media. May they make safe choices online and know where to turn when something feels wrong.



Those struggling — Pray for anyone experiencing loneliness, hopelessness, substance use, bullying, or other struggles. May they find hope, healing, and people who will listen without judgment.



Parents and caregivers — Pray for parents, grandparents, teachers, and other caring adults to recognize opportunities to start difficult conversations and to have the patience and wisdom to listen.



Friendships and peer support — Pray that young people will surround one another with kindness, encouragement, and accountability and will have the courage to speak up when a friend needs help.



Our community — Pray for churches, schools, prevention organizations, and community leaders working together to prevent suicide and substance use and to build a community where everyone feels valued and connected.



For HOPE — Pray that every young person knows they are loved, valued, and never alone, and that they can reach out for help when they need it.

*You are loved. You are not alone.
There is HOPE.* ♥

HELP IS AVAILABLE

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE
24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT

24-HR CRISIS HOTLINE
Tuscarawas Crisis Line: 330-343-1811
Carroll Crisis Line: 330-627-5240

Struggling with addiction?
330-663-6812
There is always hope. There is always help.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Faith-based clinicians available upon request with all treatment providers.

Chrysalis Counseling Center
chrysaliscounseling.com | 330-364-9360
Guiding Grace Counseling
guidinggracecounseling.com | 330-343-7400
New Life Counseling
newlifedover.com | 330-343-6600

OhioGuidestone
ohioguidestone.org | 330-343-8171
SpringVale Health Centers
springvalehealth.org | 330-343-6631
Village Network
thevillagenetwork.org | 740-922-2144

Be the one who brings the HOPE!

**EMPOWER
TUSC**
EDUCATION • AWARENESS • PREVENTION

330-440-7320
empowertusc.com

HEALTHY PEOPLE • STRONGER FAMILIES • BRIGHTER COMMUNITIES

Welcome October!



Elder of the Month

Jon McIlvaine - 330-204-2123



Ushers

Dave Gingrich - Head Usher
Jane Gingrich
Kay Whitlach
Holly Gonter
Karen McIlvaine



Nursing Home Members

CJ Struhar - New Dawn Assisted Living
Linda Schilling - Park Village
Don Page - Park Village New Phila
Jim Cotton - Park Village Independent Living
Norma Haglock - Inn at Northwood
John Bowers - Inn at Northwood
Dotty Hartzell - Canton Christian Home

We are here to pray for you!

Contact the church office at 330-364-4458
or email office@doverstjohns.org
or call Marge at 330-343-1731.
Another option is to scan the QR code!



The Boyhood Stained Glass Window

— A STORY OF FAITH, GROWTH, AND GOD'S PLAN —

"After three days, Mary and Joseph found their twelve year old Jesus among the teachers in the temple."

Luke 2:41-50

IN THE TEMPLE



Holy Scripture

The red scroll has the words "Holy Scripture" written across it. Though not a common symbol, it is used by the Christian church as the inspired record of God's revelation of Himself and of His will to mankind.



Three Pillars

Again, not a traditional symbol, the pillars, representing a city on a hill, stand for the stability and influence of the church in the world. Jesus said, "A city on a hill can not be hid".



Baptismal Font

The font is the universal symbol for Holy Baptism.



Chi Rho

Here is one of the most ancient monograms for our Lord. It is taken from the first two letters of the Greek word ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ, pronounced Christos. The letter X is Chi and the letter P is Rho.



Lamb of God

The wounded Lamb of God represents Jesus crucified. The blood flowing into the chalice signifies the body and the blood of Christ which we recall in the rite of communion. The lamb is crowned with a three-rayed nimbus denoting it as a symbol of divinity.

AT HOME



Scroll

This early form of manuscript was a symbol of wisdom. It was also used to represent St. Peter and St. Paul before the keys and the sword came into use.



Triangle

The triangle is well known as a symbol of the Trinity – the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The three small circles, containing wave-like lines, are for the fountain of living waters.



Lily and a Square

This is the emblem for St. Joseph of Nazareth. The rod is blossoming with lilies and a carpenter's square stands at the base.



Serpent and World

The sinful nature of mankind everywhere, as a result of Adam's fall, is indicated by a serpent coiled around the earth. The apple in its mouth is the symbol of temptation.

"Let the little children come to me..."

Mark 10:14

A WINDOW OF FAITH
FOR ALL GENERATIONS



*Each symbol in this window tells a part of the story —
from Jesus' time in the temple to His life at home —
reminding us that God is with us in every season of life.*

Faith
People
Community
Together
All Season Long



October 2026

FALL FELLOWSHIP ♥ WORSHIP ♥ COMMUNITY

Different Seasons ♥ Same Faith ♥ Brighter Together

Grateful
Thankful
Blessed



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<div>  <div> <div>Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!</div> <div>PSALM 150:6</div> </div>  </div>				<div>1</div> <div>10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div>
<div>4</div> <div>9 AM Contemporary Class 10:30 Worship World Communion Day Team Spirit Sunday</div> 	<div>5</div> <div>10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F 2 PM Needles & Hookers</div>	<div>6</div> <div>11:30 Bible Study @ Magic Mugs</div> 	<div>7</div> <div>7 PM Chancel Choir</div> 	<div>8</div> <div>10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F</div>	<div>9</div>	<div>10</div>
<div>11</div> <div>9 AM Contemporary Class 10:30 Worship</div>	<div>12</div> <div>10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F 2 PM Needles & Hookers 6:30 Bad Girls Book Club</div> 	<div>13</div> <div>6:30 PM Elders / Trustees / Deacons 7:30 Council Mtg</div> 	<div>14</div> <div>1-4 PM Card Party @ F&F 7 PM Chancel Choir</div> 	<div>15</div> <div>10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F</div>	<div>16</div>	<div>17</div>
<div>18</div> <div>9 AM Contemporary Class 10:30 Worship Hope Sunday Fall Fellowship Potluck Lunch after worship</div> 	<div>19</div> <div>10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F 2 PM Needles & Hookers</div> 	<div>20</div> <div>11:30 Bible Study @ Magic Mugs</div> 	<div>21</div> <div>7 PM Chancel Choir</div> 	<div>22</div> <div>10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F</div>	<div>23</div>	<div>24</div>
<div>25</div> <div>9 AM Contemporary Class 10:30 Worship</div>	<div>26</div> <div>10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F 2 PM Needles & Hookers</div>	<div>27</div>	<div>28</div> <div>7 PM Chancel Choir</div> 	<div>29</div> <div>10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F</div>	<div>30</div>	<div>31</div> 

FALL

A LITTLE KINDNESS
GOES A LONG WAY
AT CHURCH AND
IN LIFE ♥

May this month be a reminder
of God's many blessings.

♥

Faith
Fellowship
Friends ♥

