ST LUKE'S – HOME GROUP QUESTIONS – 7 APRIL 2019

'I AM KNOWN'

PSALM 23 (and John 10:7-15)

Main sermon points

If the Lord is **my** shepherd, then I can face anything with him. Because the Lord is **my** shepherd, 'I shall lack nothing' (v.1), I will fear no evil' (v.4), and 'I will dwell (v.6).

- The sheep and the Shepherd – vs. 1 - 7
- The traveller and the Companion - v. 4
- The guest and the Host, vs. 5 - 6

Possible questions for discussion:

1) What did the various word-pictures used mean to the psalmist? Why is this language still so powerful today, even in a more urbanised culture?

2) Might Psalm 23 sometimes be used as comfort-blanket, semi-escapist, me-centred spirituality? Does this matter? Have you found it helpful?

3) What experiences can we share of the protecting presence of the Good Shepherd in *'the darkest valley'* – or *'the valley of the shadow of death"*? Do you fear death?

4) Who, and where, are 'the false shepherds' who lead God's people astray today (see Ezekiel 34:7-11 and John 10:5-8)? How might they be identified, challenged and resisted?

5) 'Westerners today trust all too readily in the power of science, technology, medicine and education to solve all ills – secular humanism. Postmodern people believe in anything and nothing: money-making, management techniques, me-centred meditation and mindfulness, misleading philosophies, modish gurus and much else besides. Cultural pressures so easily divert our attention from the God whose power raised Jesus from death. He's increasingly relegated to the private sphere - becoming just one lifestyle option among many.' To what extent have these influences affected Christians who – in their private sphere - know the Lord as their Shepherd?

6) The challenge of Psalm 23 is to trust in the Lord alone for the unknown future. How can we learn to do this each day, and to enjoy walking peacefully in the way of Jesus?

7) Is our personal story of his 'good-shepherding' guidance, provision and goodness something - at the right moment – we are ready to share?

Peter LeRoy - 7/4/19