

# Advent Week 1: Shepherds and Sheep

**Materials to gather:** Candy canes, access to "Go Tell it on the Mountain" (CD, streaming)

**Die:** Color and assemble your die on or before day 1 so you can roll it to determine the daily activity.

**Nativity character placement:** Find a space near your nativity scene area to create a pasture for the sheep and shepherds. (You will create this during one of the activities.) They will stay in their pasture throughout Advent and move to visit baby Jesus on Christmas day.

## OPENING PRAYER:

*Breath in, Breath out*

**God, our shepherd**

*Breath in, Breath out*

**God, our protector**

*Breath in, Breath out*

**God, our provider**

**Give us hope today. Amen**

## SCRIPTURE (choose one for each day):

**Ezekiel 34:30-31**

**Isaiah 40:9-11**

**Psalms 23: 1-4**

**Luke 2:8-12**

**Luke 15:2-7**

## ACTIVITY TIME:

Roll the die to see which activity you will do today (choose another one if you've done it already).

Or just choose what feels good today!

## CLOSING BLESSING:

**Blessed child,**

**May God your shepherd**

**Give you hope and strength.**

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## **FINAL DAY WRAP UP:**

Finish any decorating or assembling of the shepherds and sheep. If you missed out on an activity you wanted to do, do it today. Spend some time reflecting using the following wondering statements.

*I wonder what part of the week you liked best...*

*I wonder if there was anything you learned about yourself this week...*

*I wonder if there was anything you learned about God this week...*

## **ADD TO YOUR CARE KIT:**

This week we experienced God as a shepherd who protects and provides for us. Add items to your care kit(s) that provide protection for the people who receive them. Some ideas include gloves to protect from the cold, Kleenex or hand wipes, or food items like tuna, protein bars, dried fruit or a gift certificate to a fast food restaurant. Add your items to the bags and pray that the person who receives the care kit will feel God's protection.

# Week 1: Activity Guide



Go outside and find materials to create a pasture for your sheep and shepherds. You might gather sticks, moss, or rocks to create a safe space for the sheep to graze. Place the things you gather in your nativity area. If you already cut out your sheep, add them to their new pasture.

*I wonder what it means that we are God's sheep....*



Cut out and create one of your shepherds. Using a Christmas CD, music streaming, or online video, listen to different versions of "Go, Tell it on the Mountain" while cutting out and creating your shepherd.

*I wonder how the shepherds felt when they heard the angels....*



Enjoy a candy cane while you cut out and create a shepherd. With older children, research "The Legend of the Candy Cane." With younger children, talk about how the candy cane resembles a shepherd's staff. The shepherd's staff was used to protect the sheep.

*I wonder when you've felt protected by God...*



Read through Psalm 23:1-4 three times. The first time, think about a word or phrase that sticks out to you. The second time, think about what color it brings to mind. The third time, think about how it makes you feel. Provide space in between each reading to share your thoughts.



Cut out and create one of your sheep. Then play a game of hide and seek. Take turns as one member of the family hides the sheep, while the other members try to find it.

*Read Luke 15:2-7. I wonder how God finds the lost sheep...*



Cut out two sheep. Find white, grey, or black materials around the house to give your sheep some texture. If you are using printer paper, you may want to glue your sheep and stands to cardboard (such as a cereal box) first so they can support the weight of the materials you find.

*Read Isaiah 40:9-11. I wonder how God feeds his flock like a shepherd...*