



**“I AM” DEVOTIONAL**  
**April 15, 2023 – June 2, 2023**

## **Saturday, April 15, 2023**

Read John 6:26-59 in preparation for tomorrow's sermon.

We are starting a new sermon series on the I AM statements of Jesus.

Who is this Jesus we worship?

## **Sunday, April 16, 2023**

Join us to worship the Light of the world!

9:00 am traditional

10:30 am contemporary

Both livestreamed and available on Facebook, YouTube,  
and at [FPCAmbler.org](https://FPCAmbler.org)

**This week's devotions were written by missionary Beth Hedges who grew up attending FPCA.**

**Monday, April 17, 2023**

**Read:** The passage for the week is John 8:12-21 (I am the Light of the World) but today read John 1:1-13 and pay attention to what it says about "The Light."

**Reflect:** From the very start of the Gospel of John, Jesus is identified as The Light of humanity. He is The Light that shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not understood and/or overcome The Light. In verse 1:5 John uses a word that means both things. But when light comes, anyone who opens their eyes can see it. (1:9).

This is the challenge in our rebellion or darkness. Will we allow Jesus to shine His light in our darkness? Will we allow His Light to overcome our rebellion? Will we let Jesus, and keep letting Jesus change and transform us? (1:12-13)

**Prayer:** Jesus, You are The Light that has come into the world. You are the Light that has come into my life. I confess that I do not always recognize You and that I do not always receive You. Shine Your Light in my life. Shine Your Light in my life and reveal the darkness in my life. Shine Your Light in my life and overcome my darkness with Your Light. Open my eyes to see Your Light, live in Your Light and embrace Your Light.

**Song:** Marvelous Light by Steve Hindalong  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrDCvcINk2k>

**Tuesday, April 18, 2023**

**Read:** John 8:12

**Reflect:** Walking in darkness is hard to do. It is easy to trip over something and hurt yourself. Often on cave trips the guide will turn off the lights which results in utter and complete darkness. Then even just a lit match feels like the sun itself has come underground. Here Jesus offers Himself as that kind of Light for the darkness and confusion in our lives. When we follow Jesus, embracing His values and listening to His voice, then we have The Light in which everything else is seen and understood.

**Prayer:** Jesus, You are the Light of the World. Be the Light of my life and my way. Where there is clarity and light on my way, I give You thanks and praise. Where there is confusion and darkness, speak and show me Your Way. May You shine more and more in my life so I may have life and that my life may have the fullness You want for me to have.

**Song:** Walk in the Light (the Beautiful Light)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCTROWXZjwk>

**Wednesday, April 19, 2023**

**Read:** John 8:12-18

**Reflect:** Jesus knew where He had come from and where He was going, allowing Him to dismiss the Pharisee's objections. But we are often confused. On a recent taxi ride in Yerevan, Armenia where I minister, I forgot where I was coming from and so was confused about where I was going. (Fortunately, my friend knew what was what, and I got home). This confusion can also happen in our lives when we forget where we have come from and where we are going. The reality is that we were created by God, to know God and ultimately to live with God for eternity. Does your life reflect this ultimate purpose and destination, or have you gotten turned around?

**Prayer:** God, You know me. You knit me together in my mother's womb. You see when I sit and when I rise, when I come in and when I go out. You know my thoughts from afar (Psalm 139:1b-2). Give me Your perspective on where I have been and where I am going. Ground me and my identity in the fact that I am created by You, for relationship with You, in order to live for all eternity with You. Work in me Your purposes and plans I pray.

**Song:**

Who You Say I Am (I'm a child of God, yes I am) by Ben Fielding and Reuben Morgan

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcC1Bp13n\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcC1Bp13n_4)

**Thursday, April 20, 2023**

**Read:** John 8:12-18 again

**Reflect:** Our identity is shaped and formed early on by our families and what others say about us. The teacher says we are smart (or not), our families say we are good (or not), those around us affirm us (or not). As we grow older, we often realize that what was said about us as children is not the whole story; that we are more than that, or different from what others said about us. Jesus finds His direction and identity in the Father. We also can find our direction and identity from our Father in heaven. Our identity is: beloved, redeemed, gifted, renewed, belonging and so much more.

**Prayer:**

Lord would You show me who I am in You?

*(Wait on the Lord for an answer)*

Lord, do You have a name for me? What is it?

*(Wait on the Lord for an answer)*

*(If you are struggling to hear you can listen to the songs  
from today and yesterday)*

Lord, thank You for what You have shown me. Help me to live my life in light of my identity in You. Show me day by day how You see me and the plans that You have for me.

**Song:** I Know Who I Am by Israel Houghton

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkroxD4vROo>

**Friday, April 21, 2023**

**Read:** John 8:16-21

**Reflect:** A father is an important figure. The presence or absence of a father has an enormous impact on our development and growth as children. Here we hear about Jesus' Father, who is in partnership with all that Jesus is doing and saying. So much so, that to know Jesus is to know His Father. Jesus in the Book of John knows inner thoughts, heals people, and raises the dead, cares for the outcasts, teaches with authority, has compassion, and, honestly, is sometimes mysterious and confusing. Ultimately we see Jesus' love, for when "His hour" comes, He is lifted up on the cross in order to draw everyone to Himself (John 12:32)

**Prayer:** Jesus show me the Father. Spirit show me Jesus. Father and Son show me the Spirit. God, the three in One, show me who You are. Give sight to my eyes, hearing to my ears and understanding to my heart. Help me to trust when you are mysterious or confusing. Be The Light that is Life for me. I also pray for those who do not yet see: open their eyes, and ears, and hearts that they may also come to know You Jesus, The Light and Life of the World.

**Song:** Open the eyes of my heart Lord – Paul Baloche

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9F4hP2AZAw>

## **Saturday, April 22, 2023**

Read John 10:1-10 in preparation for tomorrow's sermon.  
Listen for the voice of the Shepherd.

## **Sunday, April 23, 2023**

Join us to worship Jesus, the door to eternal life!

9 am traditional

10:30 contemporary

Both livestreamed and available on Facebook, YouTube, and at [FPCAmbler.org](http://FPCAmbler.org)

## **Monday, April 24, 2023**

**Read:** John 10:1-10

**Reflect:** In ancient shepherding societies, shepherds would bring their flocks into a large common pen at night where a gatekeeper would keep watch. In the morning, the shepherds would come to the pen and the gatekeeper would open the gate for them. Each shepherd had a unique call that their sheep recognized. The sheep would respond to their shepherd's call and follow him out of the pen. Does this change how you think about this passage? Jesus tells us he is the gate. When we go through the door that is Jesus, what do we find? We find pasture, still waters, and an entire kingdom of love, mercy, and grace. Thanks be to God!

**Prayer:** Lord, there are so many voices. Help us to respond to yours and yours alone; to hear your call and follow you.

**Tuesday, April 25, 2023**

**Read:** John 10:1-10

**Reflect:** Jesus says that HE is the gate and that any who enter the sheepfold by climbing in, rather than going through the gate is a thief and a bandit. Who might he be talking about? Perhaps prophets who spoke words that did not come from God. Religious leaders treating their role more like a political appointment than a vocational calling. Those putting burdens on people rather than loving them. And those seeking to deceive rather than follow the way of the good Shepherd. Thankfully, we belong to One who seeks and saves the lost (Matthew 18:10-14; Luke 19:10.)

**Prayer:** Jesus, thank you that you seek after those who wander and leave the 99 in search of the one who strays. Thank you for making us yours. We invite you to put your brand on our hearts.  
Lord, we want to follow you and you only.  
And we want to *want to* follow you.

**Wednesday, April 26, 2023**

**Read:** John 10:1-10

**Reflect:** Jesus calls his sheep *by name*. How beautiful is that?! He calls his sheep and waits for each one. He is the Way, the gate, and once his sheep come, he goes ahead and leads them. After following Jesus in my own, often misguided, I have found that the way of Jesus is often surprising. He leads us on paths we would otherwise not find to pastures we could otherwise not enjoy. Jesus goes ahead of us, not as an add-on to plans of our own making, but as the shepherd King, leading his own into his kingdom. Will you listen for his voice and follow?

**Prayer:** Lord, your Kingdom is where living water flows, where darkness flees and light fills, where every thought, word, and action are love. Thank you for calling us by name, for knowing us intimately, and for leading us rightly. Help us to wait for your leading and to follow you, day by day and hour by hour.

**Thursday, April 27, 2023**

**Read:** John 10:1-10

**Reflect:** Jesus said, “I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.” Do you sense the freedom here? When we enter the kingdom through Jesus who is the gate, we are *safe*. In every other religion, humans try to be good enough to be acceptable to God. In Christianity, we accept there is nothing we can do to make ourselves acceptable. But the Good Shepherd himself makes us acceptable, covering us with his own righteousness. He, a Lamb pure and spotless, was sacrificed for us and covers us with his own skin, his own sinless fleece, making us acceptable because God looks at us and sees *Him*. The Shepherd is our safety, our salvation.

**Prayer:** Jesus, thank you that You who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21.) Oh Jesus. What you endured for me! Your Father turned his face away so that we might never see his wrath. You, in relationship in your very being, endured the terrible aloneness of separation from your Father so that we could be his beloved children. May we live our lives in gratitude.

## **Friday, April 28, 2023**

**Read:** John 10:1-10

**Reflect:** Jesus said, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” Jesus is the door to true and abundant life. When we have Jesus, we have forgiveness, purpose, guidance, and peace. Happiness researchers have found that human beings need to have purpose to find fulfillment. In Jesus, we have meaning and purpose. We are called to be his agents of love, to advocate for those on the margins, to care for the least of these. We too often have a scarcity mindset. Jesus gives us life to be lived in fullness. What does “abundant life” mean to you?

**Prayer:** Jesus, thank you for showing us the Way and for BEing the way. Help us to live out the life you have for us. Freely, you gave your life for us. May our lives be an offering of thanks to you as we freely share the love you give.

## **Saturday, April 29, 2023**

Read John 10:11-18 in preparation for tomorrow’s sermon.  
Imagine being in Jesus’ presence as you hear his words.

## **Sunday, April 30, 2023**

Join us to worship Jesus, the good Shepherd!

9 am traditional

10:30 contemporary

Both livestreamed and available on Facebook, YouTube, and at  
FPCAmbler.org

**Monday, May 1, 2023**

**Read:** John 10:11-18; Isaiah 53:6

**Reflect:** Our Shepherd calls us by name, leads us, feeds us, and searches for us when we wander. Our Shepherd makes us his own. We all like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all (Is 53:6.) What kind of shepherd takes on the sin of the sheep? Lays down his own life? Only the good shepherd who is Christ the Lord. The shepherd became the lamb who was slain...for us...giving us the standing of his own unblemished self before the Father. And as he took up his life in the resurrection, he gives eternal life to all his own.

**Prayer:** Lord, we confess that we are prone to wander. Thank you for coming to seek and save the lost. You took our own sin-stained souls and covered us with your own righteousness. When the Father sees us, he sees your perfection. Alleluia, what a Savior is our Shepherd.

**Tuesday, May 2, 2023**

**Read:** Psalm 23

**Reflect:** The symbolism of sheep and shepherds is found all through the Bible. Sheep don't do well on their own. Our good shepherd leads us to lush pastures where we can rest and feed; by still waters where we can quiet our souls. He guides us through this life and walks with us through the darkest valleys. With his rod and staff he provides discipline (Hebrews 12:6-8) and protection. Our Shepherd laid down his life for imperfect, impertinent, ungrateful people. He laid down his life for me.

**Prayer:** Thank you, Jesus for letting me hear your voice calling me. Thank you for guiding me, protecting me, providing for me. Lord, you laid down your life for my sake, even me who hesitates to lay down my place in line at the grocery store, to give up my comfort, to let go of my right to be right in conflict. Thank you, Jesus, for laying down your life that we might have life to the full. Forever.

**Wednesday, May 3, 2023**

**Read:** John 10:16

**Reflect:** According to the Pew Research Center, the percentage of the worldwide population who are Christians has barely changed in the past 100 years. What *has* changed is the distribution of the sheep. Where a century ago most Christians lived in Europe and North America, the church has grown explosively in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Asia Pacific Region. Our Shepherd's sheep come from all over the world with beautiful diversity in language, dress, skin color, and custom. There will be one glorious flock following the one true Shepherd. How does this make you feel?

**Prayer:** Lord, thank you for loving all kinds of people in all parts of the world. We know that someday, every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. May we pray for and love well our brothers and sisters whose worship style differs from ours and who are geographically distant. Thank you for inviting us to be part of the choir of praise that includes your people from all times and all lands.

**Thursday, May 4, 2023**

**Read:** John 10:12-13

**Reflect:** When the wolf comes, the hired hand abandons the sheep and flees for his life. Not so the good Shepherd. Like a wolf, our enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8.) Thank God that “greater is he who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world (1John 4:4.)” Our Shepherd will never abandon us, and we often sense his closeness the most in times of danger and trial. Jesus tells us he will *never leave* us and will *always* be near us. Jesus’ care for us is steadfast, sturdy love. His Holy Spirit gives us the power to follow the Shepherd; the Lamb forgives us when we go astray.

**Prayer:** Jesus, thank you for being the good Shepherd, for offering protection in times of trial, for your unwavering love and care for your sheep. Help me to follow you always and thank you for seeking after me when I wander.

**Friday, May 5, 2023**

**Read:** John 10:14

**Reflect:** Jesus' sheep know him. What do we know about Jesus? We know that he is God and sees the whole universe from a vantage point that is not bound to time or place. Henri Nouwen wrote, "To pray is to walk in the full light of God, and to say simply, without holding back, 'I am human, and you are God.' At that moment, conversion occurs, the restoration of the true relationship. A human being is not someone who once in a while makes a mistake, and God is not someone who now and then forgives., No, human beings *are* sinners and God *is* love." We *are* sheep, limited in understanding and vision, often fearful and prone to wander. Jesus *is* our Shepherd, and in him we need not fear.

**Prayer:** We are human; you are God. We are sheep; you are our Shepherd. We are dependent, limited, and fallible. You reign, are almighty, and all wise. We need you, good Shepherd.

**Saturday, May 6**

Read John 6:26-59 in preparation for tomorrow's sermon.

What must we do to do the work God requires?

What if it's already been done and we need only believe?

**Sunday, May 7**

Join us to worship Jesus, the Bread of Life!

9 am traditional

10:30 contemporary

Both livestreamed and available on Facebook, YouTube, and at

FPCAmbler.org

**This week's devotions were written by Suzy Moore**

**Monday, May 8, 2023**

**Read:** John 6:25-26, 30-34

**Reflect:** After Jesus performed several miracles including healing the sick, feeding five thousand people from five small barley loaves and two small fish, and walking on water as he crossed the lake to Capernaum, the crowd came to find him. They questioned him having left the scene of the feast. Jesus's greeting was an admonishment not to just follow him because he gave them food to eat but rather to ask for food that endures to eternal life. Jesus himself is eternal life and by living and being in Jesus – that life is given. We today have a perspective the crowd did not have and can benefit from listening now to what Jesus taught - the key to life is to follow Jesus and his way of life which is eternal. The truth came not with his choice to feed them a meal, but that he met their need - which he knew - without their asking.

**Prayer:** Lord may we always turn to Jesus with our needs as we know he has and still does perform miracles...Miracles beyond our imagination and our requests. May we continually submit our will to His. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

**Tuesday, March 9, 2023**

**Read:** John 6:28-31, 35-51

**Reflect:** It comes up again - what good works must we do to receive the work of God, to receive eternal life? Jesus is very direct and explains we simply need to believe in Him, the one God sent. The crowd wants yet another miraculous sign so they may believe. So beautifully Jesus assures that he is the bread of life and whoever believes will never go hungry and will never be thirsty. While miracles do get our attention and do cure and fix conditions and situations, they are not the important thing, the life giving and sustaining thing for us to understand. How do we believe? Well, learning about Jesus and his life and God's word through studying the Bible is the best start! And this we can easily do.

**Prayer:** Lord, we are blessed to know that the only thing we need do to receive God's favor and everlasting life is to believe in Jesus and believe that he died for our sins and was resurrected. May we know that faith is a matter of God working in us and we need only receive his gift. We are assured that it is our faith alone that brings us close to God and that good works naturally follow in response to our being close to God.

**Wednesday, May 10, 2023**

**Read:** John 6:26-59, Deuteronomy 8:3, and Matthew 4:4

**Reflect:** Why bread? Bread enjoys a dual role in our lives. It is essential to both our physical and spiritual growth. In Deuteronomy 8:3 and Matthew 4:4 we recall first Moses' then Jesus' lesson that man does not live by bread alone but by the words that come out of the mouth of the Lord. We are given the gift in the desert of manna symbolizing that God is continually with His people and providing for their needs. We are given the gift in Bethsaida near the Sea of Galilee of the sharing of bread as a symbol of the word of God nourishing the crowd, nourishing us. The nourishment allows us to live well here with Jesus in our hearts and to assure our life to come.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, May we truly take Jesus into our hearts and lives as we daily read your word to us in the Bible. Thank you for this guide and roadmap to a life full of love, joy, peace and hope.

**Thursday, May 11, 2023**

**Read:** John 6: 26-27, 53-59; 2 Corinthians 4:18, The Little Prince, St. Antoine D'Exupery

**Reflect:** This passage allows us to see the whole of God's message to us, that life is meant to be lived with Jesus as we experience life on earth in preparation for life in heaven with God. And we see the truth that what is essential is invisible to the eye. We often long for certainty and believe if we can see it, touch it, taste it then we can believe it, and count on it. Here Jesus is talking about something more than eating a meal. He explains that eating the flesh of the Son of Man and drinking his blood creates eternal life. This means, having faith and believing allows us to remain in Jesus and to keep Jesus in our lives.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, we love our life and are grateful for your watching over us and providing for our needs even without our asking. Lead us home with you, lead us home. In Jesus name, we pray, Amen.

**Friday, May 12, 2023**

**Read:** John 6:53-59, Job 23:2, Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 30:5, Matthew 4:4, Matthew 24:35

**Reflect:** What do we need then? What are we to pack and take with us on our journey now on the way to forever more? A story is heard about a woman going on a long trip and packing her suitcase. A friend watches and the woman explains, "I am just about finished as all I have left to add are a guidebook, a lamp, a mirror, my favorite microscope, a telescope, a volume of fine poetry, a song book, and a set of books I have been studying." Her friend asked how she could fit it all in the suitcase. The woman walked over and picked up her bible and put it in saying, "And I even get a loaf of living bread."

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, we long to understand and fill our lives with You and look forward to eternal life. We dedicate and devote our time and attention to you and to Your word. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

## **Saturday, May 13, 2023**

Read John 11:17-27 in preparation for tomorrow's sermon.

Put yourself in the scene as you read and reflect.

## **Sunday, May 14, 2023**

Join us to worship Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life!

9 am traditional

10:30 contemporary

Both livestreamed and available on Facebook, YouTube, and at  
FPCAmbler.org

## **The devotions for May 15-17 were written by Bill Brams**

**Monday, May 15, 2023**

**Read:** John 11: 17-19.

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.

**Reflect:** Why did Jesus wait four days? It was Jewish tradition that the person's soul could be nearby hoping to return to the body up to three days. So, at four days there was no hope of a recovery. For all time it has been important for friends and family to support the grieving. This happened to comfort Martha and Mary and so it is to this day.

**Prayer:** Gracious God, providing support to those grieving is an important but often difficult challenge for friends and family. Please guide and bless us at those opportunities to provide comfort to others and give us the wisdom to find the right words. I ask this in the name of your son Jesus.

**Tuesday, May 16, 2023**

**Read:** John 11: 20-22.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

**Reflect:** Martha goes out to greet Jesus, but Mary’s grieving keeps her homebound. Martha going to Jesus was her moment to express her disappointment that Jesus did not come sooner so Lazarus’s death could have been avoided. This was a bold moment for Martha. They could not imagine the extent of Jesus’s powers even over death. Perhaps, like Martha, I could be more confident in my prayers and yes, even make a bold request.

**Prayer:** My dear Lord Jesus we so often fear death. Help me to find comfort in your eternal gift to us. May my fears be calmed through my faith in the message of the resurrection.

**Wednesday, May 17, 2023**

**Read:** John 11: 23-27.

Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

“Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come in the world.”

**Reflect:** Martha is caught off guard by Jesus’s statement that her brother will rise again. She could not even consider that Jesus meant right now rather than at the last day. Martha so often in this story is a surrogate for our beliefs. We often, at someone’s death, draw comfort with the statement until we meet again. Jesus’s power at that moment was greater and immediate as Jesus stated.

Jesus is the “resurrection and the life. “

Jesus dramatically puts Martha’s faith and ours on the line. “Do you believe this?” Martha answers correctly. Do we? Such a simple question that is the core of our Christian faith.

I know for me in this modern world with science and post-modern thinking challenging core Christian tenets, we can be more like Thomas than Martha. So, we need to reflect and strengthen our faith through the scriptures, our interactions with other Christians, and see the fingerprints of God in science and all around us.

**Prayer:** My gracious Lord Jesus you are the resurrection and the life. I pray that your spirit will calm and soothe me at moments of stress and loss. Guide me through the Holy Spirit to anchor my faith on a daily basis.

**Thursday, May 18, 2023**

**Read:** John 11:24-27

**Reflect:** Martha had faith. She told Jesus, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Jesus responded, “I am the resurrection and the life.” The Lord made himself known to Moses as I AM (Exodus 3:14.) There is continuity as Jesus claims “I AM the resurrection and the life.” Whoever lives by believing will never die. Jesus asks Martha, “Do you believe this?” Can we respond as Martha did? “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

**Prayer:** Jesus, we believe that YOU ARE the Son of God, the Messiah, the Resurrection and the Life. Fill us anew with your Holy Spirit and may we continuously give you thanks and praise.

## **Friday, May 19, 2023**

**Read:** John 11:17-27

**Reflect:** Jesus was only a couple of miles away from Bethany when his friend Lazarus fell sick yet waited days to go to him. Why do you think he tarried? Perhaps it was to illustrate that he is, in fact, the resurrection and the life. I have often found God to be the God of the last minute, the One who comes through when all my doing and scrambling fall short, and when I have exhausted all options. Could God have spared me the attempts? And if he had, would I still have seen him in the midst?

**Prayer:** Lord, we thank you for the ways you reveal yourself to us. You are the bread of life, the light of the world, the door of the sheep, the good shepherd, the resurrection and life, the way, the truth, the life, and the true vine. In you we have all we need.

## **Saturday, May 20, 2023**

Read John 13:31-14:8 in preparation for tomorrow's sermon.

Jesus invites us into the Kingdom of God and is, in fact, the Way.

## **Sunday, May 21, 2023**

Come and worship Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life!

9 am traditional

10:30 contemporary

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**This week's devotions were written by Debra Lee**

**Monday, May 22, 2023**

**Read:** John 13: 31-38

**Reflect:** After Judas leaves the upper room during the Last Supper, Jesus begins his “farewell discourse”, explaining to the disciples that he is going away and that they can’t follow Him just yet. He expresses tender affection toward the disciples, who are not yet aware of the plan for salvation, calling them His “children.” He speaks of glorifying the Father through fulfilling the Old Testament Law through his death and resurrection. He gives the commandment to “Love one another as I have loved you,” a love that overflows into sacrificial service, and which is true evidence that we belong to Him. It is also where Peter blusters that he’ll follow and lay his life down for Jesus, only to be told that he will deny even knowing Him three times that very night.

How am I like Peter? Do I truly follow Jesus’ commandment to love my brothers and sisters in Christ?

**Prayer:** Lord, Give me the courage to follow Jesus in love and service toward others. It is only through Your sacrifice, grace, and abounding mercy that I’m able to humbly obey and follow You.

**Tuesday, May 23, 2023**

**Read:** John 14:1-3

**Reflect:** When Jesus explained to the disciples that they couldn't follow him just yet, they didn't understand, and asked, "Where are you going? It was a heavy blow to them when Jesus said he would be leaving them. He urged them, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me," and told them he was going to prepare a place for them in His Father's house where there are "many mansions" (rooms, abiding places), and that he would come back to take them with Him. This assurance is for all believers. Like the disciples, we can't see the way ahead, but by trusting in God, there is a way into the unknown future where a place is being prepared for us – our eternal home as His children, where Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father.

How is my heart "troubled?" Am I fully trusting in God through the life and resurrection of Jesus?

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, thank you that we can trust in you to fill all our needs in every circumstance that life brings, and for the comfort and peace we have when we place and trust our lives in Your hands. Thank you for your great love for us, your plan for salvation, and the assurance we have of our eternal home with You, through Your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus.

**Wednesday, May 24, 2023**

**Read:** John 14:4-6

**Reflect:** Jesus told the disciples, “You know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas protested saying that they DIDN’T know, how COULD they know where Jesus was going?

Jesus answered by saying, “I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” This is where Jesus reveals that the God of the Old Testament’s promise is fulfilled through Him, Jesus the Messiah. The Old Testament Jew knew that the only way to God was through the Torah. By saying, “I AM the Way,” Jesus proclaims HE is the path that fulfills the Law of the Prophets found in the Torah. It was ingrained in the Jewish mind that the Torah – the Law -- made it possible to approach God. This statement was extremely radical and offensive to Jews back then (and also today) and is misunderstood as “arrogant.” At the root of Jesus’ claim is that He is the Law and the only way to God. A name for the early church was “The Way.” It is often a hard way, a road that leads to the cross where suffering is likely.

Are you willing to walk the path that leads to the cross, following “the Way” of Jesus?

**Prayer:** Lord, Thank you for revealing the Way to approach you through Jesus the Messiah. Open my understanding for the courage and confidence to walk the path of the cross, knowing that You are with me through any suffering which will only draw me closer to You, strengthen my faith, and glorify You. Thank you for your Word that reveals your plan , your desire for humanity to be with you eternally, and which guides us to You through Jesus Christ.

**Thursday, May 25, 2023**

**Read: John 13:31-38**

**Reflect:** I AM the TRUTH – The disciples were taught from childhood that absolute Truth was revealed in the Torah. The Torah was the Truth. If something didn't line up with the Law and the Prophets, then it wasn't true. The Torah revealed Righteousness everlasting from the God of Israel who is the God of Truth. Jesus was saying that He is the Truth as revealed in the Torah.

Is Jesus your Truth? Do you speak "Truth to Power" in your identity as a Child of God and follower of Jesus, rather than what the world calls "truth?"

**Prayer:** Thank you, Father, that in Christ alone we are righteous in your presence. Forgive me when I mistake my own identity and worldly desires as my "truth," making the way of the world my idol, rather than trusting in your plan for salvation, which leads to true happiness. Thank you that we can approach you and are made righteous through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, and for revealing the Truth of life everlasting life in Your only Son.

**Friday, May 26, 2023**

**Read:** John 13:31-38 I AM the LIFE

**Reflect:** The Way of the cross is also the way of Life. Through the Resurrection of Jesus, we have LIFE. The Old Testament Jews understood that the way to Life was to follow the Torah, and that to love God was to obey his commandments for a life of peace and prosperity. In the disciples' frame of mind, no ordinary person had access to God the Father, but now Jesus was proclaiming that they had access to the God of Israel through Him. Through Jesus, we have life everlasting. His statement -- I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life -- were among Jesus' last words to his disciples before his arrest and crucifixion. This statement shows the exclusiveness of Jesus as the only approach to God the Father. Jesus is the Law -- the true Torah, the fulfillment of the Old Testament Prophets, and the only way to God the Father of Israel.

How does Jesus being the Way, the Truth, and the Life lead to a deeper relationship with God the Father and with other Christians? How does it affect your relationship with your brothers and sisters in Christ, those who don't believe, and your personal walk in the world we live in?

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, thank you for your plan for Life Everlasting. Give me the understanding, courage, and wisdom to share Your message, the Good News of the Gospel, with confidence and love. Give me wisdom and discernment in my own comings and goings that I may confess my sin to be in right relationship with You and to further Your Kingdom in my own life and example. Help me to plant seeds in the hearts of others through the power of your Holy Spirit, that will bring others in relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ for life everlasting.

## **Saturday, May 27, 2023**

Read John 15:1-17 in preparation for tomorrow's sermon.

What is Jesus' command?

## **Sunday, May 28, 2023, Pentecost Sunday**

Together let us worship the True Vine!

9 am traditional

10:30 contemporary

Both livestreamed and available on Facebook, YouTube, and at [FPCAmbler.org](https://FPCAmbler.org)

**This week's devotions were written by Leslie Wise**

**Monday, May 29, 2023**

**Read:** John 15: 13

**Reflect:** Today is Memorial Day. It is a day to reflect upon and thank those who died in service to our country. In John 15:13, Jesus states that "greater love has no one but this, that one lay down his life for his friends." These men and women laid down their lives for more than friends. They lost their lives defending our nation. Their sacrifice provided the freedoms we enjoy today and for that we are forever grateful. Think about what sacrifice to others might look like in your own life. Would you be willing to lay down your life for another?

**Prayer:** Father, enable to love as Jesus loved. He expected no reward or reciprocity for His devotion toward us. Give us the faith and courage to love sacrificially with joy.

**Tuesday, May 30, 2023**

**Read:** John 15:1-5, Hebrews 12:1

**Reflect:** Kudzu is a perennial, fast growing, invasive vine. It quickly overtakes and covers natural vegetation, depriving it of light and nutrients. Eradication of kudzu is costly and can take years. It needs to be destroyed from the root. When biking on the Schuylkill River Trail last summer, I noticed most of the vegetation along the path was covered in kudzu giving it an eerie, ghostly appearance. Sin can produce the same kind of insidious growth in us. It is able to deprive one of life and air. Jesus is the True Vine. He does not prohibit growth or light. He tends and lovingly prunes His branches to be fruit bearing. Hebrews 12:1 exhorts to lay aside every encumbrance and sin which quickly entangles us. Sin can change us from beauty in the vineyard to withering under the weight of a coiling vine.

**Prayer:** Help us to discern the footholds of sin that can quickly overtake our lives. Help us to guard against fast growing vines that are destructive but can, initially, seem so enticing.

**Wednesday, May 31, 2023**

**Read:** Acts 2: 1-21, Joel 2: 28-29

**Pentecost Sunday Reflect:** I experienced the Gospel for the first time in a Pentecostal service over 40 years ago. Tongues and prophecies were spoken. My heart was touched, and I gave my life to Christ shortly thereafter. While the existence of tongues is a debatable topic in the Christian community, tongues were how my soul first heard the language of Christ. The pastor spoke what my heart needed to hear, and I sensed that my life was forever changed. How amazing it must have been to witness the Holy Spirit descending on the crowd with tongues of fire. The gatherers were able to hear the mighty deeds of God spoken in his or her language. This was the fulfillment of Joels' prophecy that God would send forth His Spirit on all mankind. The Gospel is not spoken in just one esoteric language for a special few. It is spoken in all languages of humanity. Gods understands and delights to hear them all.

**Prayer:** Pray the words of this hymn. "Holy Spirit come to us, kindle in us the fire of your love. Holy Spirit come to us; Holy Spirit come to us". Found on page 284 in the Glory to God hymnal.

**Thursday, June 1, 2023**

**Read:** John 15-1

**Reflect:** One summer long ago, I took a bus to visit my parents in West Virginia. The bus left me in a small, Southern town. As I walked to where my father was waiting to pick me up, I noticed this beautiful morning glory vine curling over a fence. The flowers were a deep blue; the early morning sun shone softly on these lovely blooms. Gazing at this vine, I experienced a sense of peace and beauty entwined together. I could have stood in that spot forever, breathing in the quiet of a summer morning. Jesus' vine is green and living, growing from love's soil. With pruning and tending from the Vinedresser, precious fruit will be borne in His fullness if we continue to abide in Him. My hope is that one day, our lives, as a church and individually, will draw others to the beauty of this vine. Peace can be found there.

**Prayer:** Help us to be patient as we wait for Your fruit in our lives. Place us in good soil where growth can best take place and flourish.

**Friday, June 2, 2023**

**Read:** John 15: 14, 15

**Reflect:** Jesus calls us friends. He has revealed the Father to us, and we are asked to believe in Him. Jesus is the most precious of friends. There is no shadow of turning in Him. He is never a fair-weather friend, and He will never betray a confidence. His sacrificial love has set us free from the tyranny of sin and death. We can turn to him with our deepest sorrows and our greatest joys. Consider the first verse in the hymn ‘What a Friend We Have in Jesus’. We often forfeit peace and create needless pain by not opening up our concerns to God in prayer. These worries can become deeply embedded, causing destruction of body, mind, and spirit. Air out those dark places of fear with a faithful Friend. “In His arms He’ll take and shield thee; thou wilt find a solace there.” Jesus is strong enough to bear every burden. Sing this hymn today as a prayer.

**Prayer:** Jesus, we try to find solace in so many things. Often, we are left broken and bereft. Help us to turn to You knowing that only the Good Shepherd can lead us out to green pasture.