

Pastor Brian's
Mid Week Message
April 14, 2021

"ROAD WEARY"

"Lord God, our shepherd, You gather the lambs of Your flock into the arms of Your mercy and bring them home."

We got back from our trip up north (I hesitate to use the term vacation as the trip contained more stress than we typically associate with vacations) last evening, culminating in a 12-hour drive from the Nashville, TN area to Gulf Cove...plus the hour lost by re-entering the Eastern Time Zone. In 9 days, we drove more than 3,600 miles, an average of 400 a day. Just thinking about that is



exhausting. It sure is good to be home again. It seems as if the farther north we got the more people are terrified by our current pandemic, even those who are fully vaccinated. The last time I saw all of you (well, most of you) it was Easter Sunday, the day of our celebration of Christ's resurrection, and ours too! A celebration of life! Of living... forever!!! What a joyous occasion that was as we all look forward to going to our ultimate eternal home, heaven, to spend our forever in the face-to-face presence of our God. One of our favorite hymns begins with the words "*I'm but a stranger here. Heaven is my home.*" Life in this world is a one long road trip, and that road often times is rougher than the Interstate Highways of Tennessee. I saw cars disappear into cracks, crevasses, and potholes in the pavement there. At one point just outside of Chattanooga I was sure that our right front (passenger side) tire was going to go flat from the impact with a canyon sized hole in the highway. Fortunately, we made it through. Such is life, with lots of difficulties to endure, but ultimately Jesus gets us through it. The 23rd Psalm is all about our Good Shepherd leading, guiding, and protecting us in our life's journey toward our heavenly homegoing. The climax is arriving safely at home, taken there by Jesus to be with Him forever, in body, soul and spirit. The quote at the top is from a prayer that is included in funeral service liturgy in our hymnal, The Lutheran Service Book. We are the little lambs that our Good Shepherd leads and feeds in this life, for the ultimate purpose of bringing us home to heaven. The prayer goes on to say, "*Comfort us with the certain hope of the resurrection to everlasting life and a joyful reunion with those we love who have died in the faith.*" We're talking about the comforts of home here...a certainty (total assurance) of life beyond death, physical life, in the home of our Lord and Savior Jesus and where all our brothers and sisters in the faith will be there with us forever. That sure sounds to me like the place I want to be.