

Mind Matters: Nurturing Spiritual Wellness and Mental Health

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November 30, 2025

9

gratitude



One
New
Awareness

What is one new awareness or insight from
this past week that you're grateful for?



We Hope Everyone Had A Happy Thanksgiving!



November Is Epilepsy Awareness Month



November is Diabetes Awareness Month





Congratulations and Salutations

**Congratulations
on the Baptisms
of the
Church and
Diana Watkins
Family of
San Antonio, TX
November 29,
2025**



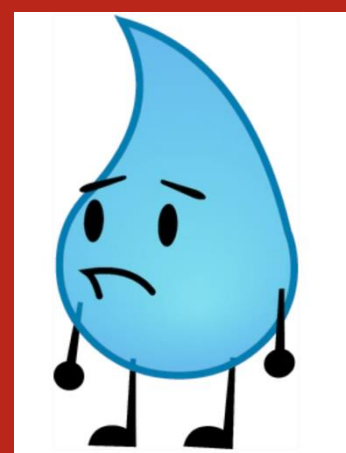
Tennessee IS DESTROYED BY Vanderbilt



Volunteers



Commodores



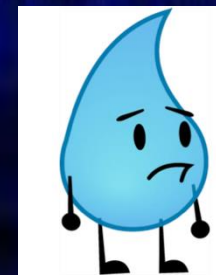
North Carolina State vs **North Carolina**

Women's Basketball --TSU **LOST** to Vanderbilt

VANDERBILT

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
LADY TIGERS
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL



Women's Basketball –TSU vs the College of William & Mary



Women's Basketball: Vanderbilt BEATS Brigham Young



Mind Matters

Nurturing Spiritual
Wellness and
Mental Health



Course Goals and Objectives

- ✓ To deepen participants' understanding of the relationship between spirituality and mental health.
- ✓ To empower individuals with tools and strategies to enhance their mental and emotional healing and well-being.
- ✓ To provide insight in how to recognize and direct others who may be experiencing mental health problems to the help they need.
- ✓ To explore the historical, cultural, and social factors impacting mental health in the African American community.
- ✓ To foster a sense of community and support among participants.



A scenic view of a lake with vibrant autumn foliage reflected in the water. The trees on the shore are in various shades of orange, yellow, and green, with their reflections clearly visible in the calm water. A small white building is visible in the distance behind the trees.

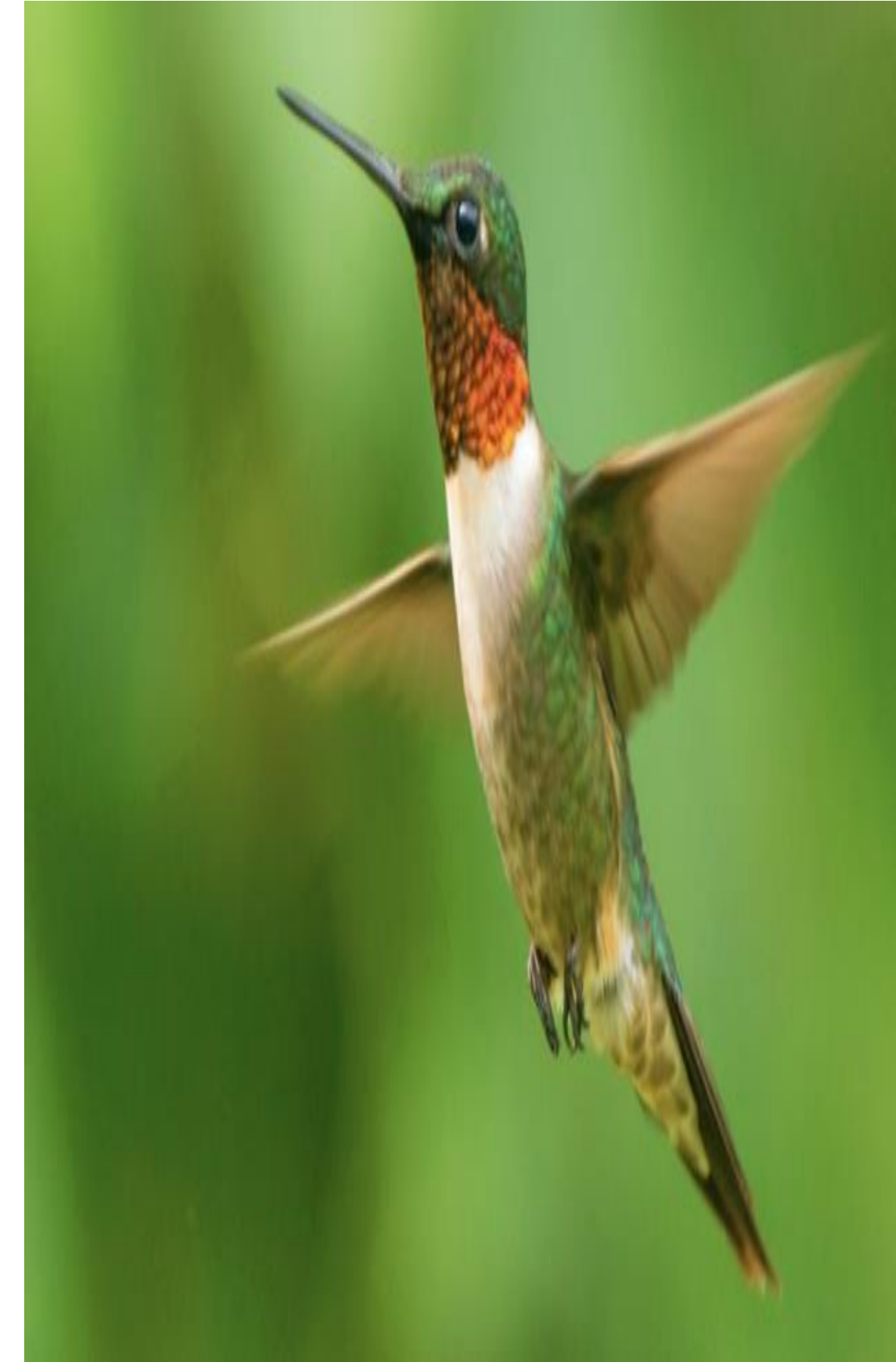
Class on Webpage

<https://www.schraderlane.org>

Scroll Down to Sunday New Adult
Class

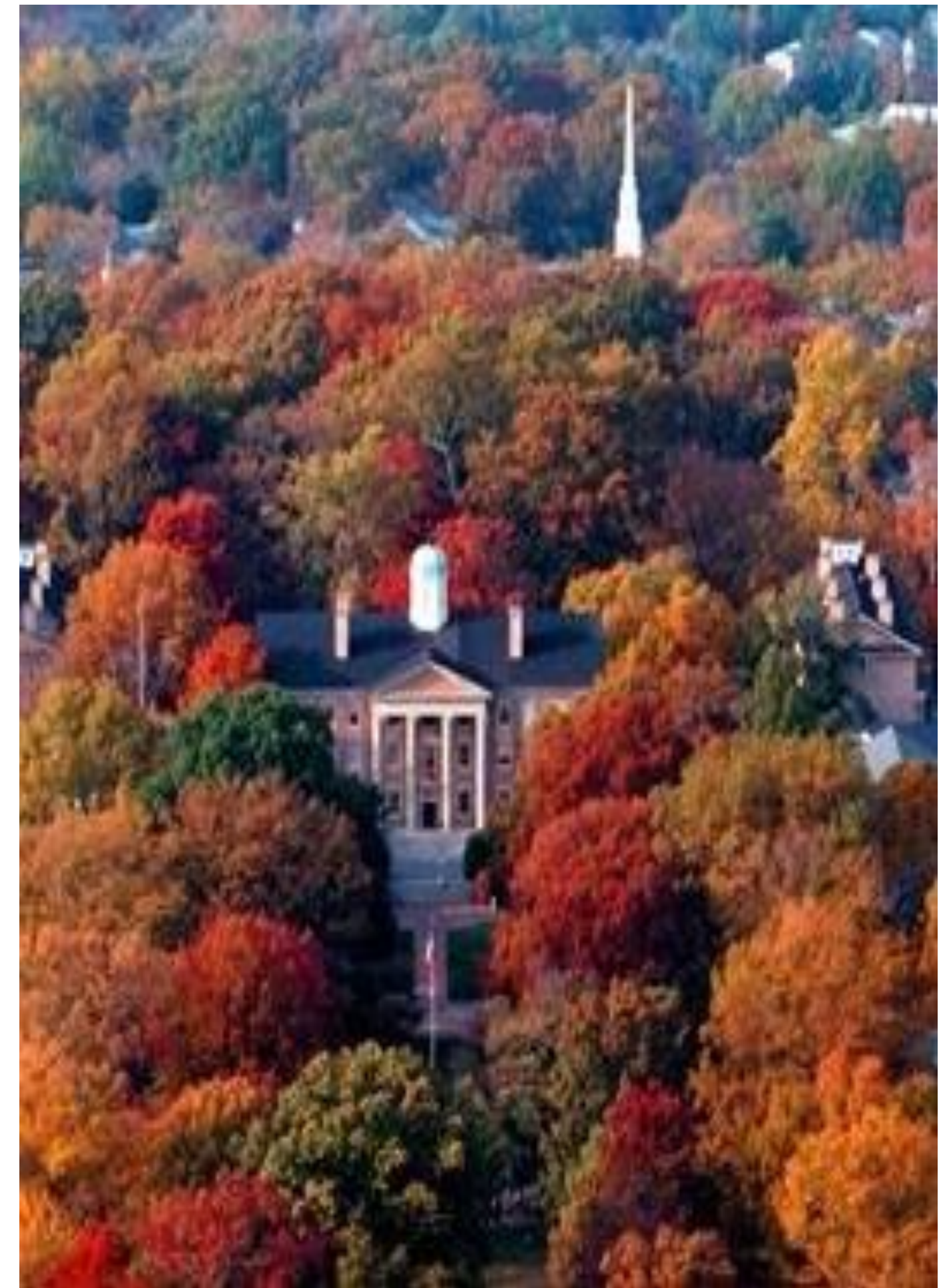
Previously Covered Spiritual Practices

- **Prayer**
 - Neuroscience of Prayer
- **Meditation**
- **Journaling**
- **Mindfulness**
- **Mindful Reading**
- **Bibliotherapy**
- **Affirmations**
- **Flourishing**
 - Positive Emotions
 - Savoring
 - Broaden and Build
 - Engagement
 - Relationships
 - Meaning
 - Achievement
- **Church Hurt**



Part 3 Mind Matters A

- The Brain/Neuroplasticity
- Trauma
 - Stress
 - Abuse
 - Devastation/Tragedy
 - Racism and Racial Trauma
 - Ambiguous Loss
- Human Dignity
- Positive Psychology
- Emotional Intelligence
- Personality Types
- ACES –Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Serious Diagnoses
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Schizophrenia
 - Bi-Polar Disorder
- Grief
- Addictions
 - Drugs & Alcohol
 - Gambling
 - Pornography
 - Sex
 - Food



Part 3 Mind Matters B

- Personal Responsibility
- Imposter Syndrome
- Relationship Concerns
- Caregiver Burden
- Mental Illness/ Treatment
- Types of Therapy Providers
 - Family Therapy –Ph.D., M.A., MMFT
 - Clinical Mental Health Counseling--MA
 - Clinical Psychology –Ph.D., Psy.D.
 - Counseling Psychology, Ph.D., PsyD.
 - Licensed Clinical Social Worker –LCSW
 - Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner
 - Psychiatry



TRAUMA: Understanding and Healing






The Bible Centers All of Our Understanding

 **Scriptural Thought of the Day**

Psalm 23:1-4

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.





Very Quick
Review on
Sunday
November 30,
2025



Psalm 23:4

Reflection

- Trauma takes us into dark valleys — memories, losses, or fears that feel unbearable.
- David's psalm reframes the valley as *a passage, not a prison*.
- Theologically, it centers on “*You are with me.*” God's companionship transforms fear into courage.
- Psychologically, this parallels the power of *co-regulation* — healing occurs in the presence of safety.



Psalm 23:4 Reflection

- **I. The Valley: The Landscape of Trauma**
- The psalmist does not say *if* but *though* — implying inevitability.
- All human beings, even the faithful, walk through valleys. These are seasons or experiences of deep loss, fear, or trauma — where the light of ordinary life seems dimmed by the shadow of pain.
- For those who have lived through personal, racial, or historical trauma, this valley can feel like a long and lonely path. The world becomes uncertain, safety feels distant, and trust — in others, in God, even in oneself — is shaken.
- The “valley of the shadow” is not just a physical danger; it is an existential one — the place where our sense of meaning trembles.



Psalm 23:4 Reflection

- Psychologically, trauma is often the experience of being *overwhelmed* — of having one's capacity to manage emotion or threat exceeded.
- Spiritually, it is the experience of *disorientation* — of asking, “Where is God now?”
- Yet even in this place, the psalmist does not describe being destroyed or abandoned.
- He walks *through* the valley, not *into* it forever. The word *through* suggests passage, not permanence — motion, not paralysis.



Psalm 23:4 Reflection

- **II. The Shadow: Fear and Perception**
- The Hebrew phrase *tsalmavet* (“shadow of death”) conveys both darkness and threat.
- It describes the psychological climate of trauma — where danger feels near, even when it’s not, and memory keeps replaying fear long after the threat has passed.
- This “shadow” is what modern trauma research calls *hypervigilance*: the body’s persistent alertness to potential harm. The psalmist, however, reframes the experience — the shadow is real, but God’s presence reinterprets it.
- **Faith does not deny the shadow; it declares that the shadow is not the only reality.**



Begin Here on November 30, 2025





Psalm 23:4 Reflection

- **III. The Turning Point: “For You Are With Me”**
- At the center of Psalm 23, the pronouns change. Before verse 4, the psalmist speaks *about* God (“He leads me... He restores my soul”). But then, the voice shifts: “You are with me.” This is not theology anymore — it’s relationship.
- **That shift is everything. When trauma isolates, *presence* heals.**
- In therapy, we call this *co-regulation* — the calming of one nervous system through safe connection with another. In faith, it is *incarnation* — the calming of the soul through the nearness of God.
- “**You are with me**” is the spiritual antidote to trauma’s core lie: *I am alone*.
- This divine presence doesn’t necessarily remove the valley, but it transforms the experience of walking through it.
- What was once terror becomes testimony. What was despair becomes companionship.



Psalm 23:4 Reflection

- IV. “I Will Fear No Evil”: Courage as Communion
- The psalmist’s confidence is not in his own strength but in relationship — “I will fear no evil, *for You are with me.*”
- This isn’t denial of fear but transcendence through trust.
- In trauma recovery, courage is not the absence of fear; it’s the reclaiming of agency while acknowledging fear’s reality.
- Theologically, this courage flows from covenant — God’s faithful promise to be present in suffering (Isaiah 43:2: “*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.*”)
The shepherd’s nearness redefines safety. Even in danger, the sheep feels secure.
- Trauma says, “I can’t survive this.”
Faith whispers, “You are not surviving alone.”





Psalm 23:4 Reflection

The Shepherd's Rod and Staff



- **V. The Rod and Staff: Tools of Comfort and Guidance**

- The verse continues, “Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.”
In shepherding, the rod symbolizes protection, and the staff symbolizes guidance.
- Spiritually, both are instruments of reassurance — the sense that Someone is guarding and guiding even when the path is unclear.
- Psychologically, this mirrors what survivors need most:
- **Protection** — a sense of safety from further harm.
- **Guidance** — a trustworthy way forward through confusion.
- **God’s rod wards off the danger without; His staff steadies the trembling within.**



Psalm 23:4 Reflection

- **VI. The Healing Movement: From Fear to Fellowship**
- Notice the progression of Psalm 23:
 - From *green pastures* (security)
 - Through *dark valleys* (threat)
 - To *prepared tables* (restoration)
- This is the same movement seen in trauma recovery:
 - **Safety** — establishing trust and stability.
 - **Processing** — walking through pain without being consumed by it.
 - **Reconnection** — returning to life, love, and community with renewed perspective.
- The valley is not the end of the psalm — it is the bridge between comfort and celebration.
- Every valley walked with God becomes sacred ground of transformation





Psalm 23:4 Reflection

- **VII. Theological Integration**
- From a theological standpoint, Psalm 23:4 affirms the heart of God's nature: *immanent presence in human suffering*.
- This is not a distant deity watching from above, but an incarnate Shepherd walking beside the wounded.
- For Christians, this verse finds its fullest expression in Christ — the Good Shepherd who entered our deepest valley, even death itself, and emerged victorious.
- His presence redeems our fear, not by erasing it, but by walking through it with us.
- The Shepherd does not call from the other side of the valley —
He meets us inside it and leads us out.





Psalm 23:4 Reflection

- VIII. A Reflection for Practice
- Meditate on this verse in silence.
 - What is your “valley” right now?
 - Where do you sense the shadow most heavily?
 - Can you imagine God walking with you through it — not rushing, not lecturing, just being?
- Breathe slowly, repeating:
 - “Even though I walk... You are with me.”
- This pairing of breath and Scripture becomes both a spiritual and neurological exercise — reinforcing calm, trust, and presence.





Psalm 23:4
Reflection-A
Closing Prayer
Thought

*Shepherd of my soul,
In the valleys where fear lingers and shadows stretch long,
teach me to sense Your steady presence.
When I tremble, remind me that Your rod defends and Your staff
directs.
Walk with me until the darkness lightens,
and lead me again to still waters.
May I fear no evil,
for You are with me — always.
Amen.*

Begin Here
November 30,
2025





The END

