**Sunday 3rd May April 2020** WORSHIP AT HOME: **Easter 4 John 10v1-10**

Welcome to our act of Worship for Easter 4, known as Shepherd Sunday

A Time of Quiet Reflection *spend a few moments reflecting, perhaps adding your name at the end of each phrase.*

Come as you are – known and loved.
Come with joy, come with hope.
Come with your burdens, come with your doubts.
Come with your dreams, come with your fears.
For God loves you and calls you by name.

Call to worship

‘But now thus says the Lord,
   he who created you, O Jacob,
   he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
   I have called you by name, you are mine.’

Isaiah 43v1

HYMN: All my hope on God is founded...

HP63, MP16, RS586, STF455

(Some of the hymn books widely used in the Wiltshire United Area)

*Prayers of Praise and Seeking forgiveness*

*taken from Luke 15 - Lost sheep and Prodigal Son*

Lord our God, we come to worship you with joy and thanksgiving,
for you welcome the perfect and the flawed alike, and gather us all into your flock.

**Lord our God, we come to worship you with joy and wonder, for Jesus is risen indeed, and alive among us.**

Lord our God, we come to worship you with joy and anticipation,
for your life-giving Spirit is alive in our world and among us, and is doing a new thing.

**Lord our God, we come to worship you because you are the mighty God, and yet a shepherd who loves and cares for us, and knows us by name.**

O Lord our God, as we come to worship you, speak to us that we might hear;
call us that we might respond, and renew us that we might love you more.
For this we pray in the name of Jesus, our Good Shepherd.  **Amen**

**God, who is like a good shepherd,
we are your people,
and we have wandered far from your presence.
We have turned our ears from your voice and listened to other voices –
the voice of greed, the voice of selfishness,
the voices of arrogance and pride.
You have offered us abundance of life,
but we have settled for so much less.
Forgive us.**

 *(A moment of quiet reflection.)*

Our God is like a good shepherd,
never giving up on those who are lost,
always ready to welcome the wanderer home.
Hear these words and take them to heart.
You are already forgiven.
God has thrown a party to welcome you home.
Therefore live as one who is forgiven,
in the name of Christ. **Amen.**

HYMN I will sing the wondrous story

HP223, MP315, RS- , STF323

**GOSPEL John 10v1-10: Jesus the Good Shepherd**

with special focus on verses 2-3

2The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

This is the Gospel of Christ.

**Praise to Christ our Lord. Alleluia!**

Reflection

In North Devon we held an annual Lambing Service, when a “pet lamb” would come to church. As children and adult alike fussed the animal its tail would frisk, but the lamb’s greatest response was when it heard the voice of the one caring for it.

Our Gospel imparts an amazing truth about the relationship that the God of galaxies and space has with us, even knowing us by name. Being referred to as sheep might not seem complimentary but it is important to remember that throughout Israel’s history, the people had been portrayed as the flock of God. Think Psalm 23, or Psalm 95

 ‘For he is our God,
   and we are the people of his pasture,
   and the sheep of his hand.

O that today you would listen to his voice!’ (v7)

Prior to North Devon I was based in Bournemouth where one Parade Sunday we thought about words from Isaiah, of God writing our names on the palm of his hand. One Scout loudly whispered to his buddy, “He must have big hands!”

Names matter and the power of a name and its value has long been immortalized in prose and poetry. They also give us an identity, on hospital duty I carry a pack of sticky labels with my name on to affix to the disposable aprons that I have to wear before meeting any patient – for we also have to wear a surgical mask which can make my voice muffled. This week those labels were invaluable as I had to go to Intensive Care, dressed in full PPE to the extent that on looking into a mirror not even I recognised myself, but for two labels, “David” “Chaplain”.

Regardless of what we look like, or who we are God knows us individually by name, loves us each uniquely and calls us to follow him. In our world where even computers generate letters and phone calls in which we are addressed by name, always seeking to gain something from us, what a contrast is our God, who in complete love calls us as his own! ‘For he is the Lord our God: and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.’ *(Book of Common Prayer)*

HYMN *The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want (Townend)*

HP -, MP1008, RS-, STF481

Little people may prefer: Jesus shepherd *(Tune: Baa baa black sheep), words by Emily Hoe-Crook)*
Jesus shepherd, helping me to grow,
follow, follow, show me where to go.
If I turn away from him, Jesus loves me back again.
Jesus shepherd, helping me to grow,
follow, follow, show me where to go.

Our Prayers

*Response*:
May they hear your voice **and be healed by you.**
We pray, Lord, for those who have been called by names that have hurt and damaged them:
especially children, young adults, the ageing…

*Response*
We pray for those longing for someone to tell them they are loved, especially the vulnerable, the abandoned, the lonely, or those believing themselves to be unlovable.

*Response*
We pray for those who have been given a label
and robbed of their true name,
especially refugees, the homeless,
and those experiencing mental distress...

*Response*

We pray for all those suffering from Covid and those grieving because of it, that we will see not solely numbers, but remember names, faces, loved ones.

*Response*
We pray for those who have forgotten their name,
especially the traumatised, those with dementia…

*Response*
We pray for ourselves,
for the names we give ourselves: failure, unworthy, unattractive… *(pause)*

May we hear your voice and be transformed by you. **Amen**

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
**Amen.**

HYMN O Jesus I have promised, *with special emphasis on verse 3, ‘O let me hear you speaking…’*

HP704, MP501, RS509, STF563

Blessing

The God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ,

that great shepherd of the sheep,

make you perfect in every good work to do his will.

And the blessing of God almighty,

be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Rev David Coppard Superintendent @ Wiltshire United Area

Bank Chaplain @ Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton

*This is service is offered to any and all, with love and prayers.*

**John 10v1-10 Jesus the Good Shepherd**

10‘Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. 2The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.’ 6Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

7 So again Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. 9I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. 10The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

**HYMNS and WORSHIP SONGS**

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**All my hope on God is founded;**
God does still my trust renew.
On through change and chance God guides me,
only good and only true.
God unknown, he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

2 Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray his trust;
what with care and toil he does build,
tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power, hour by hour,
is my temple and my tower.

3 God's great goodness so endures,
deep in wisdom, passing thought:
splendour, light, and life attend him,
beauty springing out of naught.
Evermore from God's store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

4 Daily does th' Almighty giver
bounteous gifts on us bestow;
his desire our souls delight,
pleasure leads us where we go.
Love does stand at his hand;
joy does wait on his command.

5 Still from earth to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ does call one and all:
They who follow shall not fall.

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1. **I will sing the wondrous story**
Of the Christ Who died for me;
How He left His home in glory
For the cross of Calvary.

*Refrain:*
Yes, I’ll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ Who died for me,
Sing it with the saints in glory,
Gathered by the crystal sea.

1. I was lost, but Jesus found me,
Found the sheep that went astray,
Threw His loving arms around me,
Drew me back into His way.
2. I was bruised, but Jesus healed me,
Faint was I from many a fall,
Sight was gone, and fears possessed me,
But He freed me from them all.
3. Days of darkness still come o’er me,
Sorrow’s path I often tread,
But His presence still is with me;
By His guiding hand I’m led.
4. He will keep me till the river
Rolls its waters at my feet;
Then He’ll bear me safely over,
Where the loved ones I shall meet.

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**The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want;**
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

*And I will trust in You alone,
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.*

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

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1. **O Jesus, I have promised**
to serve thee to the end;
be thou forever near me,
my Master and my friend.
I shall not fear the battle
if thou art by my side,
nor wander from the pathway
if thou wilt be my guide.

2. O let me feel thee near me!
The world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me,
around me and within;
but Jesus, draw thou nearer,
and shield my soul from sin.

3. O let me hear thee speaking
in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self-will.
O speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen,
thou guardian of my soul.

4. O Jesus, thou hast promised
to all who follow thee
that where thou art in glory
there shall thy servant be.
And Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow,
my Master and my Friend.