

Worship at Home – 3rd May 2020 – Easter 4

Key: Scriptures: :
John 10:1-10

⁴ When he has led out all of his sheep, he walks in front of them, and they follow, because they know his voice. ⁵ The sheep will not follow strangers. They don't recognize a stranger's voice, and they run away.

Key Themes:

- Jesus speaks of a shepherd whose sheep know his voice and follow him away from danger.
- It is about identity.
- The sheep know the shepherd and they know they belong to him.
- Do we know our shepherd and know that we belong to him and that are loved by him.
- Are we ready to follow his voice?

Call to Worship:

Jesus says; "I am the gate". Come, and be loved. Come and receive peace. Come, and find life.

Hymn: The King of love my Shepherd is

The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his,
and he is mine for ever.

Where streams of living water flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth,
and where the verdant pastures grow,
with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
but yet in love He sought me,
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spread'st a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and O what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days
thy goodness faileth never:
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house for ever.

Henry Williams Baker (1821-1877)

Prayers:

We come to you, O God, in penitence for what we have done. We come to you in anticipation for what you offer to us. We come to you in hope for we know you will give us abundant life.

Generous God, you offer us abundant life, yet we ask for more; you offer us security and sanctuary, yet we seek our own way – despite the risks. You offer us guidance and direction, and we ignore you and take our own way. We are sorry for our ingratitude. We are sorry for our arrogance. We are sorry that we think we know best. Forgive us, renew us and restore us to abundant life in you, in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Psalm 23 - New Revised Standard Version

A Psalm of David.

¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;

³ he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

⁴ Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;

for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
my whole life long.

Reflection:

- The Lord has promised to be our shepherd, the one who will lead us to green pastures and still waters. What might that look like for us in lock down at the moment?
- How might we respond to God's promise?

Reading: John 10:1-10 - A Story about Sheep

10 Jesus said:

I tell you for certain that only thieves and robbers climb over the fence instead of going in through the gate to the sheep pen. ²⁻³ But the gatekeeper opens the gate for the shepherd, and he goes in through it. The sheep know their shepherd's voice. He calls each of them by name and leads them out.

⁴ When he has led out all of his sheep, he walks in front of them, and they follow, because they know his voice. ⁵ The sheep will not follow strangers. They don't recognize a stranger's voice, and they run away.

⁶ Jesus told the people this story. But they did not understand what he was talking about.

Jesus Is the Good Shepherd

⁷ Jesus said:

I tell you for certain that I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ Everyone who came before me was a thief or a robber, and the sheep did not listen to any of them. ⁹ I am the gate. All who come in through me will be saved. Through me they will come and go and find pasture.

¹⁰ A thief comes only to rob, kill, and destroy. I came so that everyone would have life, and have it in its fullest.

Reflection:

- Even though we have not shared all the set readings for today if we have we would have discovered that they are all about identity.
- Identity as the community of faith living together as one.
- This identity can be known through relationship with one another.
- Or a shared moral character when under pressure.
- Or a willingness to listen to and recognise the voice of Jesus Christ calling is to be one with him.

- Before, Covid-19 we might have described part of our identity as attending that particular build on a specific day of the day, but right now that is not the case.
- Instead our identity is more defined by the people we are becoming.
- A caring community that look out for one another
- That call each other
- That pray for one another
- That recognise that self-isolation is harder for some than it is for others.
- And most importantly, that our identity in Christ is not confined to a building but because of Christ's death and Resurrection we are Easter people and have our identity in him.
- Jesus says that he is the good shepherd and that he is the gate.
- He invited us to hear his voice and follow him through the narrow gate that leads to paradise with in.
- Because of Easter, we have a second change at life, an opportunity to seek a new identity in Christ should we choose to accept it.
- Our identity does not reside in a dress code or a religious strapline, but in the quality of a common life in Christ.
- Will we chose to have life and life in all its fullness as we craft our identity in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

Amen.

Prayers:

For your presence in our lives great Shepherd of the sheep;
We praise and adore you.

For the security you offer us great Shepherd of the sheep;
We praise and adore you.

For your life that enriches our life great Shepherd of the sheep;
We praise and adorn you.

For the sense of belonging great Shepherd of the sheep;
We praise and adore you.

For our place in your sheepfold great Shepherd of the sheep;
We praise and adore you.

Loving God, we pray for those whose lives are empty; for all who feel alone and unloved, practically at this time of social distancing and separation for those around us. We pray for those who feel their lives lack a purpose at the moment..

Lord of Love;

Bring them abundant life.

We pray for those whose lives are filled with anger and bitterness; for those who cannot let go of the past, and so have no p[resent or future.

Lord of love

Bring them abundant life.

We pray for those whose lives are filled with anguish and pain; for those who suffer depression; for those who are afraid; for those who cannot see a way forward. Lord we practically pray for all those who have died alone without family around them because of Covid-19, comfort those families in their lost and draw them close to you.
Lord of love

Bring them abundant life.

We pray for those who live on the edge; for those who watch others enjoy life but are unable to join the group; for those who lack faith; for those whom others ignore. Lord today, we pray for all key workers who are having to live life on the edge. We pray for teachers, NHS worker, Shop workers, Delivery services and all those who are keeping our country going at this time. We pray for their protection and for your strength as they go about the duties they perform.

Lord of love

Bring them abundant life.

Loving God, may your abundant life fill our world, our church and ourselves in the name of Jesus.

Amen

As we are not in the same room I wanted to introduce you to a new song. You will not know it but the words are great so can I encourage you to read them through prayerfully as we close our worship.

Song: Christ lives in me By Rend Collective

I cast my life like ashes on the waves
And leave behind all of my selfish ways
My past is gone, now all that's left is grace
To live is Christ, to die is gain.

I have been crucified with Christ
It is no longer I who lives
But Christ lives in me
I have a second chance at life
My future's open wide
I know Christ lives in me
He lives in me.

My dreams I lay surrendered at the cross
My hands held high, my knees upon the dust
My choice is made, I've counted up the cost

To live is Christ, to die is gain
To live is Christ, to die is gain, oh.

I have been crucified with Christ
It is no longer I who lives
But Christ lives in me
I have a second chance at life
My future's open wide
I know Christ lives in me
He lives in me
Hallelujah, hallelujah

I'm pressing on, pressing on to Heaven
I've seen the power of Your resurrection
The Savior of my soul, is Jesus Christ alone
I'm pressing on
I'm pressing on, pressing on to Heaven
I've seen the power of Your resurrection
The Savior of my soul, is Jesus Christ alone
It's You and You alone
I have been crucified with Christ
It is no longer I who lives
But Christ lives in me
I have a second chance at life
My future's open wide
I know Christ lives in me
I have been crucified with Christ
It is no longer I who lives
But Christ lives in me
I have a second chance at life
My future's open wide
I know Christ lives in me
He lives in me
Christ lives in me

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