

## Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for use while we are unable to gather together to worship. If you are well enough we invite you to spend a few moments with God, perhaps at 10:30am, the usual time our worship begins, knowing that other people are also sharing this act of worship with you.

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***As we come to worship you may like to have a time of silence and light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.***

### Opening Prayer

Jesus says, "I am the gate.

Come and be loved, Come and receive peace.

Come and find love "

### Hymn: StF 570 As we gather, Father, seal us

Graham Kendrick

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen: <https://youtu.be/jomPZGNSN3s>

As we gather, Father, seal us  
In the love that knows no fear.  
Draw us, heal us, reconcile us,  
May there be a place of refuge here.

No more outcasts, no more strangers,  
all dividing walls are down.  
here is love that redefines us,  
Dignifies the least and lowest one.

*Who share one Living Bread...*

*Who share one Living Bread,  
One Father's love,  
One Saviour's grace,  
One Spirit's breath;  
One holy communion.*

Source of joy, belonging, friendship,  
Form your family likeness here,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
That the world may know our God is near.

*Who share one Living Bread...*

### Let us pray with praise and thanksgiving.

Loving God,

we thank you for everything you have provided for us through Jesus Christ,  
for the beauty of our world and for all the gifts that you have given us.

Gifts which we can use to bring love and happiness to those around us.

We thank you for the support and guidance  
you have given us during the past week,  
especially when we have felt disheartened  
and needed your strength to carry on.

Loving God, we know that we have,  
through our weaknesses and through our fear, failed.  
Failed to love You and failed to love our neighbours.

Loving God, we know that Jesus promised to forgive all those who are truly sorry, so this morning, we ask You to forgive us.

Lord , give us the strength and guidance to do Your will and be true disciples.  
Amen

**Today's Gospel Reading:** John 10: 1-11

**Additional Readings:** *Psalm 23, Acts 2:42-47, 1 Peter 2:19-25*

### **Time to Reflect:**

In the reading from John's Gospel, you may have noticed that, when he answered the Pharisees, Jesus chose to use the image of a Shepherd. It was image which they would have recognised. Not only would they have seen the many shepherds on the hills around Galilee, but they would have also known about the way shepherds had featured in the history of their nation. They would have known about shepherds from their Scriptures. They would have known, just as we do, the Song of David which begins "the Lord is my shepherd".

Jesus, as well as David, realised that everyone was aware how a shepherd looked after his flock. How he would nurture them, protect them, keep them safe and how every one of his sheep was important to him. The sheep needed nothing else other than their shepherd to keep them safe.

**Take a moment to reflect on how you feel?**

**Do you feel safe or do you fear the future in these times of lockdown and social isolation? or do you feel comforted, protected, safe as you walk this "dark path"?**

Later, in chapter 15 of John's Gospel, Jesus uses another image to explain to the disciples about the love of God and how he cares for each one of us.

He tells them "I am the vine; you are the branches...abide in me as I abide in you".



It is a wonderful image, which I hope speaks to you just as it speaks to me, that whatever happens, God is there. He is with us, just as the shepherd is always there for his sheep. Our Lord cares for us, and more than just being near us, “He abides in us”.

At this time, when we may find ourselves worrying, fearful about the future, concerned about what will happen next, we can take comfort that our Lord, who is our Good Shepherd, will be with us. We can rejoice that we live and abide in our Lord’s love.

He is with us now and always!

### **A time of prayer**

Let us pray this morning for our world, especially those who cry out in pain.

We pray for those who are facing the future with uncertainty, for those who are anxious about tomorrow, and who doubt their own ability to cope with the current situation.



We think of those who are suffering throughout our world, for those who long for the fighting to end, for those who have no food, no water and nowhere to shelter.



We pray for our families, our friends, and for the members of our Churches.  
*(you might like to name names here)*

Loving God, we pray that you will reach out to all who cry out in need, and give to them the peace that only comes through Your Love.

Finally, Lord, we pray that your Spirit of Truth and Love will fill all our hearts today, tomorrow and every day. Amen

**The Lord’s Prayer:** *Our Father .....*

## Hymn StF 481

### The Lord's my shepherd

Stuart Townend

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim  
the words or listen:

[https://youtu.be/A-qLa\\_2GPcM](https://youtu.be/A-qLa_2GPcM)



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 I will trust in You alone, etc*

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.

*And I will trust in You alone, etc*



### A prayer of blessing

May God bless and guide us.  
May God give us strength,  
and the assurance of his love.  
May God fill us with his presence  
Today and always.  
Amen.