

Sunday Worship for 25 April

The Fourth Sunday of Easter: 'Meeting the Good Shepherd Where We Are'

SONG

The Lord's My Shepherd (Townend)

Performed by Ollie Mills, Director of music at St Nick's

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

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

Words and Music: Stuart Townend

The president says

Alleluia. Christ is risen!
All **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The Lord be with you.

WELCOME

Given by Rev Rachel Mann, Vicar of St Nicholas, Burnage in Manchester

'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep ...'

It is a great delight to join you in this season of Easter from the church of St Nicholas, Burnage in Manchester as we worship Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd. Today we have an opportunity to reflect with people from St Nick's on what it means to meet the Good Shepherd where we are today. For many of us, and certainly for many people in an urban church like St Nick's, the world of shepherds and sheep can feel very far off.

Nonetheless, Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He says 'I lay down my life in order to take it up again'. He is our Passover lamb and shepherd and we are called to be the people of his pasture.

HYMN

The King of Love My Shepherd is

Sung by the St Martin's Singers, Directed by Andrew Earis

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.

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.

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

Words: Henry Williams Baker (1821-1877)

Tune: Kingsfold

The president says

Christ our passover lamb has been sacrificed for us.
Let us therefore rejoice by putting away all malice and evil
and confessing our sins with a sincere and true heart.

Silence is kept.

Lord Jesus, you raise us to new life.
Lord, have mercy.
All Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you forgive us our sins.
Christ, have mercy.
All Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you fill us with the living bread.
Lord, have mercy.
All Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
All Amen.

REFLECTION

Given by Storm Janeway, member of the congregation

‘The Good Shepherd for a New Christian’

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Read by Rachel Varughese, member of the congregation

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles. (4.5-12)

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, ‘By what power or by what name did you do this?’ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is “the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.” There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.’

This is the word of the Lord.
All Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

Given by Grace Manley, Assistant Warden

‘The Good Shepherd we meet in worship’

ANTHEM

Jesus Remember me

Sung by St Martin's Singers, directed by Andrew Earis

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom,
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom,
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Words and Music: Taizé Community

PSALM 23

Read by Sam Travis, member of the congregation

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

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

he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

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.

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

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.

THE GOSPEL

The gospel (Alison Mills, Warden and Accredited Lay Minister) says

A reading from the Gospel according to John. (10.11-18)

'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father.

And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice.

So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.'

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Rev Rachel Mann

DECLARATION OF FAITH

Let us declare our faith in God.

All **We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

ANTHEM

'GLORIA'

Performed by Eilidh Pollard, Ollie Mills & Lorna Mills

Gloria in excelsis Deo
et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te,
benedicimus te,
adoramus te,
glorificamus te,
gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam,
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili unigenite, Iesu Christe,
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris,
qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis;
qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus,
Iesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu: in gloria Dei Patris.

Amen.

Music by: Ollie Mills

PRAYERS

Led by Giles Elliot, member of the congregation

Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me"

God of Love, we offer you your church, remembering especially the congregations where we worship. It's been a hard time for all of us, but we pray especially for those who haven't been able to share in technological ways of meeting, and who are too vulnerable to attend churches when these have been opened. And we acknowledge our longings: to sing together, to touch, and to hug. We remember, too, our duty as under-shepherds of The Shepherd. Give us the strength and the wisdom to offer love, support, and hope, to those who need it.

Lord, in your mercy
All hear our prayer

God of love, you did not send your Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it. So we offer you the world we see in all its brokenness and anguish and need for redemption; where people suffer from war, poverty, and persecution, and the planet itself suffers because of our greed and carelessness. Open the ears of the leaders of the nations to your words of justice and peace, and show us, too, where we can be your agents for change.

Lord, in your mercy,
All hear our prayer.

God of love, we pray for the communities in which we live: our homes, our work, our neighbourhoods, our friendships. We think of the people who have lost jobs or businesses because of the virus, or who have struggled particularly with isolation and loneliness. For those who feel lost, we ask that they can sense the presence of the Good Shepherd to guide and encourage them. Help us to be aware of those times where we can bring that presence to people we know.

Lord, in your mercy,
All hear our prayer.

God of love, we pray for those who suffer, including any known to us. At this time we remember especially those who are ill with Covid-19, and those for whom treatment for other conditions has been delayed because of the pandemic, as well as those whose mental health has worsened because of lockdown. And we remember those who are grieving the loss of those they love. We pray, too, for those who minister to them, and who are worn down by their workload, as well as by being close to so much suffering and heartache.

Lord, in your mercy,
All hear our prayer.

Finally, God of love, we pray for ourselves. We acknowledge the ways in which we feel lost and in danger, whether through circumstances around us, or turmoil within. Open our hearts so that we can hear your call, and give us the grace to respond with love for you and for those around us.

God of love,
All Accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
The Good Shepherd, Amen.

The president prays

Risen Christ,
faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep:
teach us to hear your voice
and to follow your command,
that all your people may be gathered into one flock,
to the glory of God the Father.
All Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

BLESSING

Rev Rachel Mann

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
through the power of the Holy Spirit;
and the blessing of God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and for ever.

All Amen.

HYMN

Come All Ye (Who Are Heavy Laden)

Arranged and Performed by Ollie Mills, with Rachel Mann

Come all ye who are heavy laden,
Come all ye in need of peace and gentle rest,
In his company God's love is waiting,
Calling north, south, east and west.

Though this hard world can leave us bleeding,
Though this tired world groans, fears our Holy Guest,
Come dear God with wounds for tender healing
Call us friend, lover, and call us blessed.

When the sweet bread is blessed and broken
When the wine's love is poured for all again
We shall meet the God who is our welcome,
Who is faith, hope, and our loving friend.

We shall gather all around God's table
Place of rest, joy and blessed, wondrous Word,
God who washes feet, and feeds the hungry,
God whose justice will not be spurned.

Living God come meet me in my hunger
Rage with me when I'm scared and all alone,
You adore all our holy difference,
Lift us all to your joyous throne.

Who is welcome when our God calls out?
Who belongs to the mighty Kingdom come?
Come all ye who want new day's dawning
Meet our God, sing his welcome song.

Come all ye who are heavy laden,
Come all ye in need of peace and gentle rest,
In his company God's love is waiting,
Calling north, south, east and west.

Though this hard world can leave us bleeding,
Though this tired world groans, fears our Holy Guest,
Meet our God with wounds for tender healing
Calls us friend, lover, and calls us blessed.

Tune: Traditional
Words: Rev Rachel Mann

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Service led by Rev Rachel Mann.

With thanks to Alison Mills, Warden and Accredited Lay Minister, Grace Manley, Assistant Warden, Giles Elliot, Sam Travis, Rachel Varughese and Storm Janeway, members of the congregation.

Music Performed by Ollie Mills, Director of music at St Nick's with Eilidh Pollard & Lorna Mills. Also St Martin's Singers, directed by Andrew Earis.

BSL Interpretation by Naomi Barry.

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