

## Morning Worship for 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020 at 10.30am

### Easter 4

Good morning everyone and welcome to worship in these extraordinary times when we are the church but are not in church.

Find a comfy place to worship in your home, maybe light a candle to help you in your reflections, and remember that God is present with us as we gather in his name, and that wherever we are, we are the body of Christ.

#### Opening Prayer:-

Loving and faithful God, you hold us in your love. Still our anxious thoughts and calm our fears that we may know your healing, saving love as we worship you today. Amen

**Hymn STF 323** I will sing the wondrous story of the Christ who died for me,  
How he left the realms of glory for the cross of Calvary:  
*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.*

I was lost; but Jesus found me, found the sheep that went astray,  
raised me up, and gently led me back into the narrow way:

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:  
*Francis Harold Rowley (1854-1952)*

**Prayer: (adapted from Roots)** We come to worship you today loving Lord, because we know we are welcome. We come because you call us by name. We come to offer you our worship, O Lord. Forgive us for what is past and protect us from all that is to come. Amen

**We say the Lord's Prayer together.....**

**Bible Readings for today: Psalm 23 & John 10 v.1-10** (if you do not have Bible to hand this is the passage in which Jesus, speaking directly to the pharisees who have criticised him for a healing. It contains one of Jesus' "I am" sayings – "I am the gate" (to the sheepfold) and the promise that Jesus has come that we "might have life and life in all its fullness."

**Reflection:** One of the most difficult things about our present lockdown is not being able to see our grandchildren. So, the highlight of any day is that precious video call. Although Harry happily chats away to us, at just one, Charlie doesn't really know what's happening. However, as I said his name the other evening, he lifted his head and flashed me a beautiful smile which made my week. He knew my voice. In this passage Jesus says he is the gate to the sheepfold, that he calls us by name and in turn we follow him as our Shepherd. What a wonderful picture that Jesus, our Saviour, calls us by name, we are his sheep, he leads us through life. I have been so devastated by the loss of life from the Covid 19 virus, as have we all. But it is essential that we

remember that each one of those “numbers” is a person with a name and a story and family and friends who loved them dearly. Not a statistic, a life. So how comforting to us that we are all God’s precious children, He knows us better than we know ourselves and in Jesus has given us a wonderful Saviour to lead us on even if this life we are living at present is frightening and disorientating and in many ways small. Jesus died for us on the cross that we might have life in all its fulness both now and in the life that is to come. May we be strengthened in our faith as we realise this afresh. And so we pray: For all time, and in whatever we face; the Lord is our shelter, our security, the place where we find a home. Thanks be to God. Amen.

**Prayers of Intercession:**

Lord Jesus, we pray for all who have died of the Covid 19 virus in hospital, in care, or at home and for their grieving family and friends who can’t say goodbye as they would have wished.

We pray for all NHS workers, and all key workers in their self-giving care.

We pray for our families and friends, separate from us now, and for our church family near to us through the mystery of worship.

We pray that we would continue to be your “Easter” people and spread your Gospel joy in word, prayer and deeds of love. Amen

**Hymn: STF 481**

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, 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.

**Blessing:** The Blessing of God the Father, God the Risen Son and God the Holy Spirit, be with us now and always. Amen

***Consider this my “virtual” handshake!! Stay safe and well and please contact me if you are in any need. God bless, Helen. 01765 698288***

***Next Week’s Service 10.30am Worship at a place near you!***