



# The Methodist Church

Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit  
Worship at Home  
Week beginning Sunday October 11<sup>th</sup>  
2020

## Welcome

Welcome to our Service at Home this week. Today we will be exploring Jesus as our Shepherd. May God speak to each of us today.

## Psalm 106

*Praise the Lord!*

*O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever. Who can utter the mighty doings of the Lord, or declare all his praise? Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times.*

*Remember me, O Lord, when you show favour to your people; help me when you deliver them; that I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory in your heritage.*

## Hymn 313

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,  
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;  
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,  
kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay:

Ch Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,  
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.

Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;  
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;  
let the Church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,  
for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting:

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of Life;  
life is naught without thee:  
aid us in our strife;  
make us more than conquerors through thy deathless love;  
bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above:

Edmond Budry (1854-1932) translated by Richard Birch Hoyle (1875-1939) Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition.

## Prayers

**Creator God**, we praise and thank you for the immensity of your love: the love that brought the universe to birth; the love that designed and ordered our world; the love that breathed life into humankind.

**Saving God**, we praise and thank you for the endurance of your love: the love that came to share our human life; the love that died for us upon the Cross; the love that triumphed over hatred and death.

**Strengthening God**, we praise and thank you for the power of your love: the love that brought your church to life; the love that transforms hearts and minds; the love that dares and cares, shares and unites.

**Forgiving God**, we praise and thank you for your forgiveness and so we ask you to search our hearts, and show us where we have fallen short (*Pause and listen to His voice*)

We confess and ask that in your love you renew our relationship with you.

**Loving God**, we praise you for you are worthy of all praise; For the blessings you give to us For the teaching you bring to us

For the peace you allow in our hearts.

**Amen**

## Hymn 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

**Ch** 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.

Stuart Townend (b. 1963)

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### **Reading Mark Ch 6 vs 30 to 34**

The apostles returned to Jesus from their ministry tour and told him all they had done and taught. Then Jesus said, “Let’s go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.” He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn’t even have time to eat.

So they left by boat for a quiet place, where they could be alone. But many people recognized them and saw them leaving, and people from many towns ran ahead along the shore and got there ahead of them. Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

### **Talk - Jesus our Shepherd**

Now some of you know that I take some time every year helping out on a friend’s farm, looking after some of his sheep as they lamb. I wouldn’t call myself a shepherd at all, but I have found out quite a bit about sheep in my years on the farm.

Sheep are really quite like you and I. Some of them are just standard sheep, doing Sheep type things, eating grass,

walking around, bawling occasionally, lying down - just the normal sheep.

Some are curious and will come and investigate and explore, other a timid and keep at a distance keeping themselves to themselves. Some are wayward and will always go a different way, others are adventurous and may get into trouble.

Just like you and I.

But what is in common with them all is that they need a shepherd. Especially when things are not so good for them, the grass is not rich and they need a new pasture, they get caught in a thicket and they need releasing, they cut their feet and need healing. Sheep need a shepherd.

There are sheep in this flock which I have seen over the years, some I recognise, and some recognise me. One or two may have been pet lambs - not many if we can help it. They watch me as I approach the pen, come over to see if I have anything good for them.

In the reading I chose for today Jesus looked upon the people and saw that they were like a ‘Sheep without a Shepherd’, and He began to teach them.

And still today Jesus looks upon us in the same way, with compassion and with love. Perhaps we too can be like Sheep without a Shepherd, and yet we have the best Shepherd available. A Shepherd who knows the situation we are in, whether we are just going about our daily lives or if we need His help and love. He is there for us, our Good Shepherd, and he teaches us still, even in these days.

Jesus says this of His Sheep;  
***My sheep recognize my voice. I know them, and they follow me. (John 10 vs 27)***

**My sheep recognize my voice.** I love this, if we are to recognize His voice that must mean that He speaks directly to us,

to you and me, what a privilege, that you and I can hear Jesus voice.

Do you know that voice, deep down? Would you hear His voice above the noise of the day, not just the noise you hear in with your ears, but the noise that is deep inside you when things are on your mind. When we know someone well, it is easy to hear their voice above all the noise. Because Jesus is our Shepherd let us strive to know His voice so we will recognise it when we need it most and when we just need to know his love.

**Jesus says ‘I know them’** But Jesus will not force Himself on us. Unlike the shepherd that drives the sheep before Him, Jesus is the kind Shepherd who leads his sheep, and those He leads he knows. He knows how they will follow, and what might lead them astray too.

So here is a challenge for each of us; do you allow Jesus to Know you, have you told him your deepest thoughts, concerns and needs, Do you share your good times and your excitement and joy with Him too.

Because Jesus is our Good Shepherd, He really want to know us and know what’s in our deepest desires, our hopes and our concerns. Didn’t He once say, “Whatever you ask in my name...”?

I think that sometimes we think that we have to get to know Jesus to be blessed. Well that is true, but we I think that we must also allow Him to know us too if we are truly to receive His blessings. Be open to Him in all things, and by allowing Jesus to know us, we also begin to know ourselves more too

This is our Good Shepherd, let Him get to know you more each day by spending time with Him.

**Jesus says, ‘They follow me’** When we are asked by Jesus to follow Him, all we see is the start of the journey and no more. And that is enough.

No journey following Jesus, is going to be especially easy, nor is it going to be more that we can take. Jesus will always be with us always; we never follow on our own.

But there is something we need to be able to do. To follow someone, we need to be able to be close to them, keeping them in sight so we can see when they change direction to avoid places we should not go.

We are to follow Jesus closely, not covertly. Follow His ways, His thoughts, His actions and His paths and make them known to others that they may follow too, and become part of His flock.

I encourage you to get to know Jesus’ ways and actions in the Bible, speak with Him often in your prayers, talk about Him with others in your fellowships and coffee times. The better you get to know Jesus the easier and closer you will be able to respond to His command. Follow Me. **Amen**

### ***Prayer of Response***

Jesus our Lord, we are sheep in need to a shepherd. We open ourselves to you. Teach us your ways and help us to know your voice and we will follow you.

### ***Prayers of Intercession***

Lord we have set aside this time to pray, yet as people and situations pop into our minds today, and in the week to come, help us to take time to hold them in your love and to pray for them.

We pray for those who have suffered this week, especially those that have found themselves isolated or in new lockdowns. Those that cannot travel to see those they love, and for those that may have lost loved ones.

**PAUSE** - Lord in your mercy - Hear our prayer

We pray for those who have rejoiced this week, for those that have found a time of enjoyment and comfort and encouragement in someone they have

met or something that have seen or heard.

**PAUSE** - Lord in your mercy - Hear our Prayer

We pray for those I have seen this week, our neighbours and friends, people who caught my eye in the street whose name I don't even know. For those we have seen face to face and those we have seen on Zoom.

**PAUSE** - Lord in your mercy - Hear our Prayer

We pray for those we have longed to see this week. Those who we would normally be able to meet but because of this situation have not been able to. Those we might bring a word of hope, a laugh or a comfort to.

**PAUSE** - Lord in your mercy - Hear our Prayer

We pray for ourselves. That we might feel your love more strongly and know your peace more closely. That we might be able to do your will and bless someone else with what you have given us.

**PAUSE** - Lord in your mercy - Hear our Prayer

Lord with us here, take these prayers in the name of Jesus.

**Amen.**

### ***The Lords Prayer***

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.**

### ***Hymn 479***

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) Reproduced from  
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### ***Final Blessings***

May God who knows all things past  
present and future go with us into this  
week and keep us safe until we meet  
again.  
**Amen.**