

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – 3rd May 2020

A short act of worship for use in people's homes while churches are closed.

You can follow the whole service here [Full Service](#)

OR you can use the text below and watch each element in turn via the link shown beside that section.

Opening Prayer

Lord God, loving Father be with me as I come to worship, to pray and to hear you speaking to me. May I pause and recognise why I need to worship, to thank and to honour you Give to me a tangible awareness that you are always with me and now by the Holy Spirit I am together with others as I worship. I ask this prayer in the name of Jesus my Good Shepherd, Saviour and friend. Amen.

Reading - Ezekiel 34: 11, 15-16 ¹

¹¹ “For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. ¹⁵ I myself will tend my sheep and make them lie down, declares the Sovereign Lord. ¹⁶ I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

HYMN Songs of Fellowship 2231 ² [You Tube Link](#)

*Bless the Lord, O my soul;
O my soul, worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy name.*

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning;
It's time to sing Your song again.
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me,
Let me be singing when the evening comes.

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger,
Your name is great and Your heart is kind.
For all Your goodness, I will keep on singing;
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find.

And on that day when my strength is failing,
The end draws near and my time has come,
Still my soul will sing Your praise unending;
Ten thousand years and then forever more!

Jonas Myrin & Matt Redman © 2011 Thankyou Music/Said and Done/Jonas Myrin/
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Prayer of praise and confession

I praise you, O God, for giving shape and meaning to the ancient image of yourself as shepherd through the person of Jesus Christ. In him, your compassion has been eternally revealed, giving your rod and staff the human face of love. Through Jesus' persistence in seeking and saving the lost - your goodness and mercy has been abundantly experienced. His life continues to guide and lead me in paths of righteousness. How can I do other than praise and adore You, O God, and listen to Jesus' voice as He calls me to follow Him?

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, I admit I have wandered far from your presence.

I have turned my ears from Your voice and listened to other voices –

the voice of greed,

the voice of selfishness,

the voices of arrogance and pride.

You have offered me abundant life, but I have settled for so much less.

Forgive me and draw me back into the fold. Amen.

Reading – 1 Peter 2: 21b-25 ¹ [Click here for reading](#)

Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ²² 'He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.' ²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ 'He himself bore our sins' in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; 'by his wounds you have been healed.' ²⁵ For 'you were like sheep going astray,' but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Reading – John 10: 1-10 ¹ [Click here for the reading](#)

¹ 'Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. ² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognise a stranger's voice.' ⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

⁷ Therefore Jesus said again, 'Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. ⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Reflection [You Tube Link](#)

HYMN Singing the Faith 628 ² [You Tube Link](#)

Faithful One, so unchanging,
Ageless One, You're my Rock of peace.
Lord of all, I depend on You,
I call out to You again and again.
I call out to You again and again.
You are my rock in times of trouble.
You lift me up when I fall down.
All through the storm Your love is the anchor,
My hope is in You alone.

Brian Doerksen (b1965) © 1989 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing/Adm. by CopyCare.

Prayers for others and ourselves led by Chris Bennett [Click here](#)

Father God, we come before you, our loving, heavenly Father, to pray for others and for ourselves, and to ask for your intervention in our nation at this challenging time.

We bring before You all who are unwell, especially those affected by the coronavirus, naming before You any we know personally...

May they know Your healing touch.

We pray for everyone who has recently been bereaved...

May they know Your comfort in their sadness, Your presence and peace in their loneliness.

We thank You and pray for every key worker, naming before you those known to us...

Protect them Lord, and give them courage and strength to keep going in difficult circumstances.

Provide all they need, and help us to encourage and support them if we can.

Thank you Lord for the healing you've brought to our Prime Minister, Boris Johnson. We bring before You all the leaders of our nation, asking that you would give them wisdom to make the right decisions in these unprecedented times...God of truth, please bring our nation back to a place where Your word and Your ways are honoured.

We pray for Your church, the body of Christ, scattered across the world yet one in You.

Show us how we can reflect Jesus in our neighbourhood, even though we can't meet up with people as we used to. Bring to mind anyone we need to make contact with...

and open our eyes to any opportunities You create, maybe over the phone or internet.

We pray for those who don't yet know You Lord...

In this time when so many things in our world are being shaken, we pray that they would find You, our eternal Rock, who can never be shaken.

Finally Lord, we pray for ourselves, asking that You would fill us afresh with the Holy Spirit. Whatever our circumstances, may we know Your strength, Your peace and even Your joy within. As we go forward into a new week, help us to honour and glorify You in all we say and do. Thank you that You promise to be with us and that we can be confident that our future is in Your hands. (Psalm 31 v 15)

We ask our prayers in Jesus' precious Name, Amen.

The Lord's Prayer said slowly and thoughtfully.

HYMN Singing the Faith 481 ² [You Tube Link](#)

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 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) © 1996 Kingsway's Thankyou Music.

Blessing – Hebrews 13: 20-21 ¹

²⁰ Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, ²¹ equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Acknowledgements

¹ Bible Text is from New International Version Bible, Anglicized.

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