

Easter 4
Good Shepherd Sunday
25th April 2021

Introduction & welcome:

Jesus said, 'I am the good shepherd. I lay down my life for the sheep.'

Hymn: *The Lord's my shepherd - Townend (mute!)*

<https://youtu.be/-eIQQayhpak>

Gathering

In God we find our soul's restoration:

he leads his flock as the good shepherd, our Lord.

In God we learn to fear no evil:

he leads his flock as the good shepherd, our Lord.

In God we are granted goodness and love:

he leads his flock as the good shepherd, our Lord.

May each of us sense the guidance of God and the blessings he pours upon his people. **Amen.**

A prayer of confession:

Far we wander, frequently we stray, in mind and word and deed.

Please look on us with goodness and mercy, Lord, when we have wronged you, and where we have injured others on the way.

It is never your desire that any be hurt or harmed, always your will that blessings will overflow.

Yet, where our actions hinder such blessing, for ourselves and for our neighbour, rescue us with your eternal staff and lead us back to your path of righteousness.

Hear the words of grace 'Your sins are forgiven.'

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Collect:

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. **Amen.**

New Testament reading: Acts 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: **Thanks be to God**

Prayer for all ages

You, Lord, are our good shepherd: you give us all we need.
You make us lie down in green pastures: lead us by quiet waters.
You guide us in paths of righteousness: may we go in your name.
Sometimes we must walk through dark valleys:
please help us not to be afraid.
You are with us to guide and to comfort: we will not be afraid!
You provide so much for us: make us grateful.
Your goodness and love will follow us all the days of our lives:
we will dwell in your house for ever! **Amen.**

Gospel: 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: **Thanks be to God**

Prayer activity

You can use the outline of the sheep attached below to reflect on God's loving-kindness. You can write a prayer on it, colour it in, stick cotton wool to it to make it more "sheepish" - the possibilities are limitless!

Prayers of intercession:

Lord our shepherd, you lead us with tender, loving care.

We pray for those who wander,

trying to discern their way in difficult times:

for the unemployed, those seeking work and new direction.

Lord our shepherd, guide us.

We pray for those who are passing through dark valleys:

the sick, the depressed, the hungry.

Lord our shepherd, guide us.

We pray for those who are anointed with the task of leadership: leaders of nations, of local and religious communities. We pray for those who must negotiate to bring an end to enmity and violence.
Lord our shepherd, guide us.

We pray for ourselves, that we may set a table of hospitality before all who need our help, that our overflowing cup will be shared with others.
Lord our shepherd, guide us.

We pray for the dying, that they will come to dwell in your house and know your comfort in their final days.
Lord our shepherd, guide us.

All this we ask in the name of the Good Shepherd, Jesus, our master and our friend. **Amen.**

We pray together as Jesus taught us,

Our Father...

The Peace:

The peace of the Lord be always
with you;

And also with you

Tangnefedd yr Arglwydd a fo
gyda chwi bob amser

A hefyd gyda thi

The Blessing:

In the name of the Good Shepherd,
who sacrificed his all for his flock, go onward in his way.

In the name of the Good Shepherd,
who calls us to sacrifice for his flock, go onward in his way.

And as he drives us on, may we know his presence with us,
night and day, now and always. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord! **Amen. Alleluia!**

Hymn: I will sing the wondrous story (mute!)

<https://youtu.be/1QZo56woLsA>

