**Morning Prayer 3rd May 2020 Fourth Sunday of Easter**

**Preparation:**

Grace, mercy and peace

from God our Father

and the Lord Jesus Christ

be with you

**and also with you.**

This is the day that the Lord has made.

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

We have come together in the name of Christ

to offer our praise and thanksgiving,

to hear and receive God’s holy word,

to pray for the needs of the world,

and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,

that by the power of the Holy Spirit

we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. So, confident in his death for us, and in his resurrection life, let us seek the Father’s forgiveness for our sins:

**Almighty and most merciful Father,**

**we have wandered and strayed from your ways**

**like lost sheep.**

**We have followed too much the devices and desires**

**of our own hearts.**

**We have offended against your holy laws.**

**We have left undone those things**

**that we ought to have done;**

**and we have done those things**

**that we ought not to have done;**

**and there is no health in us.**

**But you, O Lord, have mercy upon us sinners.**

**Spare those who confess their faults.**

**Restore those who are penitent,**

**according to your promises declared to mankind**

**in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,**

**that we may live a disciplined, righteous and godly life,**

**to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent

have mercy upon you;

pardon and deliver you from all your sins;

confirm and strengthen you in all goodness;

and keep you in life eternal,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Blessed is the Lord,

**for he has heard the voice of our prayer;**

therefore shall our hearts dance for joy

**and in our song will we praise our God.**

Blessed are you, Lord our God,

creator and redeemer of all;

to you be glory and praise for ever.

From the waters of chaos you drew forth the world

and in your great love fashioned us in your image.

Now, through the deep waters of death,

you have brought your people to new birth

by raising your Son to life in triumph.

May Christ your light ever dawn in our hearts

as we offer you our sacrifice of thanks and praise.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

**Blessed be God for ever.**

**The Word of God:**

**Psalm:** *Psalm 23*

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 paths of righteousness

 for his name’s sake.

**Even though I walk through the**

 **valley of the shadow of death,**

 **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**

 **for ever.**

**Glory to the Father and the Son and to the Holy Spirit**

**As it was in the beginning is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**Epistle:** *Acts 2:42-47*

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

**The Easter Anthems:**

*1 Corinthians 5.7b, 8; Romans 6.9-11 & 1 Corinthians 15.20-22*

**Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us:**

**so let us celebrate the feast,**

**not with the old leaven of corruption and wickedness:**

**but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

**Christ once raised from the dead dies no more:**

**death has no more dominion over him.**

**In dying he died to sin once for all:**

**in living he lives to God.**

**See yourselves therefore as dead to sin:**

**and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Christ has been raised from the dead:**

**the first fruits of those who sleep.**

**For as by man came death:**

**by man has come also the resurrection of the dead;**

**for as in Adam all die:**

**even so in Christ shall all be made alive.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning is now**

**and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**Gospel:** *John 10:1-10*

‘Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.’ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

**Sermon:** *Rt. Rev. Philip Mounstephen, Bishop of Truro*

**The Creed:**

I believe in God, the Father almighty,

creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried;

he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;

he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting.

Amen.

**Prayers:**

Lord Jesus, good shepherd,

**Feed your sheep, we pray.**

Lord Jesus we continue to pray for all who bear particular responsibility for the rest of us in this crisis. We pray for local and national government, especially for Cornwall Council and the large and engaged voluntary sector here in Cornwall. We pray too for everyone who works to care for the most vulnerable in our society: for those who work to combat domestic abuse, to tackle loneliness and isolation and to ensure that our foodbanks remain stocked and staffed. And however we can, help us all to be truly good neighbours to one another.

And we pray for our Churches, in this strange time. Even though we still cannot meet, strengthen us as your body and give us the inspiration and creativity of your Holy Spirit that we may know just how best to reach out and love and care for those in our communities in the name of our Lord Jesus.

And help us to be ready to be the kind of Church you would have us be as we emerge from this crisis: a Church above all that reflects and reveals your risen nature and your healing love; devoted to the apostles teaching, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers – and devoted above all to you, our Lord.

Lord Jesus, good shepherd,

**Feed your sheep, we pray.**

Lord Jesus, we pray for all those who are lonely and fearful of what the future holds. Turn fear into hope by your presence; turn doubt into confidence through your gift of faith.

And we pray that you will lift this shadow from us: that the spread of this virus be slowed and reversed. Give us hope for the future, and protection here in the present.

We pray for all those who care for us in this time of trial. We pray especially for all those working in the NHS and the emergency services; for those in the social care sector and delivery drivers. We pray for all who work to keep us safe and supplied with what he need. We thank you for them and we pray that you will bless, strengthen and encourage them.

We pray especially for those who are sick and suffering. We pray that your caring hand will rest upon them to give them comfort and peace.

And we pray for all those who are bereaved, and for those who care for them: may they know that as they weep so you weep with them. Give them confidence in the resurrection of the dead.

Lord Jesus, good shepherd,

**Feed your sheep, we pray.**

Lord Jesus, in this troubled time we pray that you will help us to be people of hope, people who have hopes for a better future beyond all this. And may we be people who see those hopes come to fruition. Help us together to work for a better, a more compassionate, a less acquisitive and a more sustainable and loving world.

And Lord whatever trials and troubles we may currently face, keep us strong in hope knowing that you are indeed the resurrection and the life; and help us so to be the Church you would have us be that many others too come to know you as their Saviour, their Lord, and their God

Lord Jesus, good shepherd,

**Feed your sheep, we pray.**

**Hymn:**

The King of love my Shepherd is,

 Whose goodness faileth never;

I nothing lack if I am His,

 And He is mine forever.

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 oh, 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 forever.

*H.W.Baker (1868)*

**Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Easter:**

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.

Gathering our prayers and praises into one,

let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name;**

**thy kingdom come;**

**thy will be done;**

**on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation;**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,**

**the power, and the glory**

**for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

**The Conclusion**

**The Blessing:**

The God of peace

who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,

that great shepherd of the sheep,

through the blood of the eternal covenant,

make you perfect in every good work to do his will,

working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight;

and the blessing of God Almighty,

the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,

be amongst you and remain with you both now and evermore. Amen

**The Grace:**

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**

**And the love of God**

**And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit**

**Be with us all evermore.**

**Amen**