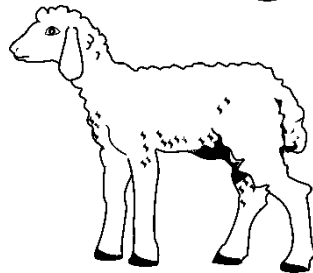
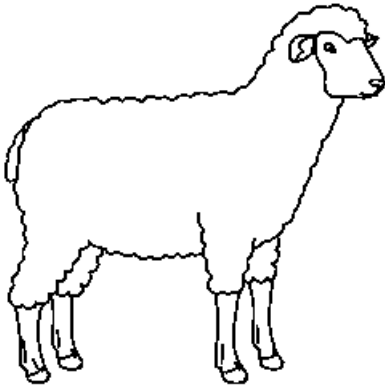
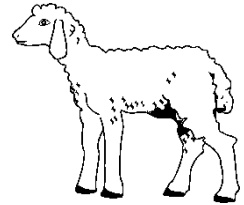
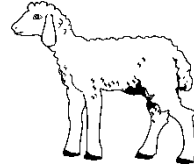
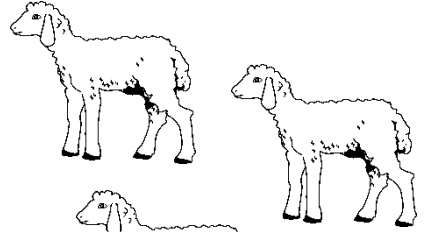
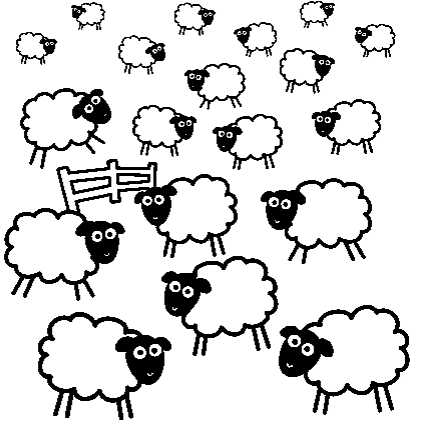


3rd Sunday of Easter

ALL-AGE SERVICE

Sheep & Lambs....



Welcome

In this month's All Age Service we are exploring being a sheep, and what a shepherd does for us.

If you're at home, could you write your name on one of the sheep on this page, or draw a sheep and write your name on it? In church you will be given a sheep cut-out to write on! You'll then be ready for this service...

Geoffrey

Hymn – The King of love

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcCwUF0s -Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcCwUF0s-Y)

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.

William Henry Baker
(1821 - 1877)

Opening

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all.**

**Lord, direct our thoughts,
teach us to pray,
lift up our hearts to worship you
in Spirit and in truth,
through Jesus Christ. Amen**

Confession

**Lord God, our maker and our redeemer,
this is your world and we are your people:
come among us and save us.**

**We have wilfully misused your
gifts of creation;**

Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.

**We have seen the ill-treatment of others
and have not gone to their aid;**

Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.

**We have ignored evil and dishonesty
and failed to strive for justice;**

Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.

**We have heard the good news of Christ,
but have failed to share it with others;**

Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.

**We have not loved you with all our heart,
nor our neighbours as ourselves;**

Lord be merciful: forgive us our sin.

Absolution

**God who is both power and love,
forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Jubilate

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qS-7qh9tz0>

Jubilate, ev'rybody.
Serve the Lord in all your ways,
And come before His presence singing,
Enter now His courts with praise.
For the Lord our God is gracious,
And His mercy's everlasting.
Jubilate, Jubilate,
Jubilate Deo! *(sing through twice)*

Fred Dunn
(1907-1979)
©1977 Kingsway Thankyou Music

Scripture Reading

John 21.1-19

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.' He said to them, 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the lake. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.' So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?'

He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.'

A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'

He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.'

He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'

Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.' (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn – Open our eyes, Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eerjElgk4Dg>

Open our eyes, Lord,
we want to see Jesus,
to reach out and touch him
and say that we love him;
open our ears, Lord,
and help us to listen;
O, open our eyes, Lord,
we want to see Jesus!

Repeat

Robert Cull
(b1949)

Talk

It's spring, and the lambs are happily playing in the fields. I love watching them. It all looks so natural as they skip around and play chase or "who can climb highest". And yet I know that the lambs are only flourishing because there's a shepherd keeping an eye on every field, every ewe, every sheep.

That's what shepherds do. They did it in Jesus' time, and they do it today. Care for their lambs and their sheep.

It was because Jesus cared for everyone he met, that he saw himself as a shepherd, and his followers as his sheep. He knew that people needed looking after as they struggled with illness, disability, hunger, poverty, injustice. The gospels are full of stories of Jesus' deep care and love.

Time and time again we see Jesus looking after the people around him, modelling good behaviour, being their shepherd.

So in today's reading, Jesus is encouraging Simon Peter to follow his example, and like a shepherd, take on responsibility for looking after Jesus' apostles, his flock.

Three times Jesus emphasises that he sees Simon's role as a shepherd:

- Feed my lambs
- Tend my sheep
- Feed my sheep

However the sheep are still Jesus' flock his because he says "Feed **my** sheep", it's just that Simon also needs to take responsibility for them as a shepherd takes responsibility for their sheep.

So what does a shepherd do for their sheep?

- Check they're ok
- Help them with lambing
- Bring food to them in winter
- Take them to new places
- Teach them how to behave
- Gather them back to the field when they have gone astray

Simon Peter had often gone astray - it wasn't long since he has denied Jesus three times at his trial. He had gone badly astray, and yet here was Jesus trusting him again fully, carefully bringing him back into the flock. I'm sure Simon's delight at seeing Jesus again, and his headlong dive into the sea to get to him first must have warmed Jesus' heart!

I wonder what it means to us to think of ourselves as sheep? How do we go astray? Look at the picture or cut-out sheep with your name on it...

"Going astray" sounds rather cuddly and nice, but because of that, it's easy to overlook that Jesus had an uncanny ability to cut through any self-satisfaction in the people he was with, exposing any selfishness or meanness in their actions and lifestyle.

Jesus woke people up to aspects of their behaviour that really, really needed challenging and changing, and he was passing this responsibility also on to Simon.

Jesus' sheep need to be different. He challenged people's behaviour and then, when they had started thinking about what was wrong in their lives, and appreciated that he was genuinely helping them to live free-er and happier lives, they wanted more.

They trusted him, and followed him because they knew his voice, even though they were unsure where he would lead them.

One by one the sheep became a flock. And this would continue under Simon Peter.

So we too are a flock – listening to Jesus, following him together, and enjoying the company and the journey.

And listening to Jesus' voice – however that comes to us –

How do we hear Jesus voice today?

- through gathering on a Sunday morning,
- by a sense that Jesus is with us in our thoughts and actions,
- by times of prayer and reflection,
- by reading about his life and teaching.

By whatever means, listening out for Jesus' calling, and following him as part of his flock is the only worthwhile way of living.

Now, in church, we'll gather our sheep into a flock here on the altar, giving thanks that we are all cared for by our shepherd, and ready to continue following his command to "Follow me."

Thank you Jesus.

Amen.

Affirmation of faith

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

The Peace

Jesus says to his disciples,
'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.
Not as the world gives do I give to you.
Let not your hearts be troubled or afraid.'

The peace of the Lord be always with us.

Hymn - O let the Son of God enfold you

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llmF3xc2vKM>

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you
with his Spirit and his love;
Let him fill your heart and satisfy your soul.
Oh, let him have the things that hold you,
and his Spirit, like a dove,
will descend upon your life and make you whole.
Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs.
Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs.

Oh, come and sing the song with gladness
as your hearts are filled with joy.
Lift your hands in sweet surrender to his name.
Oh, give him all your tears and sadness,
give him all your years of pain,
and you'll enter into life in Jesus' name.
Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs.
Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs.

John Wimber
(1933 - 1997)

Prayers

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,
let us pray to the Father.

You sent your Son, the Good Shepherd, to bring
good news to the poor,
sight to the blind,
freedom to captives
and salvation to your people:
anoint us with your Spirit;
rouse us to work in his name.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Send us out to encounter those in need,
and work with them

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Send us to tell the world
the good news of your healing love.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Send us to comfort
the sick, the lonely, the depressed.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

Send us to those who mourn,
to bring sympathy and understanding where there is grief.

Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

**Merciful Father,
accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

Gathering our prayers and praises into one,
as our Saviour has taught us, so we pray:

**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.**

Collect

Almighty Father,
who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen
Lord:
give us such knowledge of his presence with us,
that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life
and serve you continually in righteousness and truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Hymn – Will you come and follow me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnXOEUS7BBM>

Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?

Will you leave your self behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare,
will you let me answer prayer
in you and you in me?

Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

John Bell (b1949)
Graham Maule (b1958)

Closing Responses

The Lord God almighty is our Father:
he loves us and tenderly cares for us.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our Saviour:
he has redeemed us and will defend us to the end

The Lord, the Holy Spirit is among us:
he will lead us in God's holy way.

To God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be praise and glory today and for ever. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have taught us
that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters
we do also for you:
give us the will to be the servant of others
as you were the servant of all,
and gave up your life and died for us,
but are alive and reign, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Blessing

The peace of God,
which passes all understanding,
keep our hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always. **Amen.**