

Here's the thing: sheep will always be at risk. And, yes, a closed gate will keep the sheep safe; but it will also stop the sheep from gaining access to the life-giving pastures, and they will then starve! The open gate is the means by which the good shepherd may enter and lead the sheep. So, then, what is our gateway? Could it be, perhaps, the wood of the cross?

Every blessing,
Derek.

Collect, Special Prayer for today

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.

New Testament Reading

Acts 2.42-47

NT Pg: 128

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

New Testament Reading

1 Peter 2:19-25

NT Pg: 250

For it is to your credit if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, where is the credit in that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

'He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.'

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Gospel Reading

John 10:1-10

NT Pg: 110-111

'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.'

News

Important News from St Paul's Dorking. Downing Street announced on Thursday that the Queen has approved the appointment of Rev'd Ruth Bushyager, the Vicar of St Paul's, to be the next Bishop of Horsham, in the Diocese of Chichester. Due to the current coronavirus situation no departure date has been agreed. [CLICK HERE](#) for the press release and to watch the launch media event on the Diocese of Chichester's website.

Coronavirus and St Martin's Finances. This is a difficult subject to raise when there are far tougher challenges around, but you will appreciate St Martin's has overnight lost all its income from concert hirings, Sunday plate collections and wall safe donations. We are very fortunate that a high proportion of our regular congregation give by standing order etc and we are extremely grateful for their continuing support in these difficult times. Most of our costs are fixed though we of course will be saving on eg our energy bills (which drop in summer anyway). It is too early to give an indication of the net financial "hit" to our budget and we recognise that of course many of you will also be seeing a personal drop in income; however if anyone does feel able to take out a standing order (ideally with Gift Aid) Nick (01306 887870) would be delighted to send you the paperwork.

Coronavirus - Pastoral Care. If anyone is housebound, for any reason, and especially at this time, the pastoral team can always be contacted and will be pleased to offer assistance in getting any essentials such as food or medicines. Please either call the Church Office on 01306 884229 or for direct support from the Pastoral Team email: stmartinspastoral@gmail.com

Traidcraft. Please contact Elizabeth Dobson direct on 881479 if you would like items delivered locally.

Dorking Foodbank is operating at the usual times ([CLICK HERE](#) for these) from the Christian Centre. Demand is currently very high, and stocks are far lower than usual for this time of year. Donation points in supermarkets remain in place even though the one in the Centre is not available in the current lockdown. The most critical donations we need this week are: Tinned meat, tinned veg, rice pudding, shower gel, and tinned pulses.

St Martin's Magazine. The May edition of our parish magazine is now available on our website. [CLICK HERE](#) to read.

Christian Centre news. Although the Centre Café is closed, the foyer is open for Community Fridge access 9am-2.30pm on weekdays, plus hot take-away meals are available on weekdays at 12pm. Please call the centre to book your meal on 886830.

News and Notices for the next issue of the Weekly News Sheet need to be with the Church Office by the close of business on Wednesday. Please email smartinsdorkingchurchoffice@gmail.com or call 01306 884229. The Church Office is closed. However, Vicki and Michelle can still be contacted by email or telephone.

Please remember in your prayers: Pamela Kerslake, Betty and Brian Smith, Paul Berning, Heather Anderton, Mike Kendrick, Simon Hardcastle, Frankie Stoner.



And those who have recently died: Brian Carr, Dorothy Rowe, Jacqueline Lloyd.

Those in our congregation who have long term concerns are prayed for regularly.

Being corporate at a distance. In these unprecedented times we are fortunate that there is a wealth of resources in different media available to enable us to be corporate even when not co-located! Whether you have a basic radio or the latest smartphone, there is something for you:

Our Sunday Service on our "Spire of Dorking" YouTube Channel Available from 11am on Sunday. Click on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuzOsRDiiRJE8Y3Zjr3fj0g>

Bishop Andrew's Sunday Sermon Click on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5ZaeY6vgog&feature=youtu.be>

Your 9am Daily Prayer Click on this link: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer> Scroll down and click on the green Morning Prayer box.

Radio Choral Evensong on BBC Radio 3 on Wednesday at 3.30pm, with a repeat on Sunday at 3pm. **Sunday Worship** on BBC Radio 4 at 8.10am.

TV Sunday Worship on BBC One at 10.45am. **Songs of Praise** on BBC One at 1.15pm.

Live Stream Event St Paul's Dorking are streaming Sunday services live via their website.

st martin's DORKING

WITH ST. MARY'S PIXHAM

Sunday 3rd May
Easter 4

Message From Derek

Hello, once more, from the vicarage Study. As I typed that I thought to myself: "I really must come up with a new opening sentence next week!"

Last week I commented on how the readings set inevitably drew one to the topic of journeying. And I want to follow on from that and think a little about one of the more important things needed when undertaking... some means of knowing how to find the place that you wish to get to.

If you are a fell-walker, that would be something along the lines of a map and a compass. If you are a holiday-maker and exploring new destinations, that might be a knowledgeable tour guide. If, however, you are a sheep and you need to get to good pasture... good pasture that is also safe pasture... then you are probably going to need the services of a good and reliable shepherd; a neat segue into this week's readings, don't you think?

Most of this week's readings, and particularly the gospel reading from John, speak in terms of sheep and shepherding:

1Peter2:25 has this... "For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls." John 10:1-10 is a parable told using sheep as shepherds as the primary devices for teaching wisdom.

Now, in each of the examples that I mentioned at the outset it isn't actually enough just to have the map, for example; it needs to be the correct map. It isn't sufficient to have a compass; you need to know that it is a correctly calibrated and true compass. And if you're the holiday-maker in my example and exploring new places, I think you'll find that it's not really enough to simply latch onto somebody that you have spotted wandering around holding a rolled-up broly aloft and shouting, "This way, come along, follow me..." and with a gaggle of people wandering aimlessly along behind. I suppose, if you were really adventurous (another word might be foolhardy) you *could* give it a go... see *where* you end up... it *could* be interesting... but it would not be my advice; nor is it Jesus' advice in the parable that he relates!

I love the fact that, in this reading, we learn that the people that Jesus is speaking to don't actually get it first time round. They are focussing, as I have done above, on the shepherd... rather than focussing on the gate! Now that's easily done... especially as, if you look at the lectionary for Easter 4, the psalm set is the 23rd psalm... you may recognise it: "The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing...". No mention of a gate there! You could be forgiven for thinking, then, that the point of the parable *must* be the shepherd, rather than the gate. But... is it?