



**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**

## WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

I as Chaplain welcome you to the eighth St George's Barcelona and Andorra Virtual Church Service. We are continuing the Eastertide season .. Ascension Day is just under three weeks away. It would be great to be together by then, but even if not ... the Lord is with us.

During this service, after each hymn being announced, I will allow time for you to change the YouTube link if you choose. Also, after each passage of our Bible reading is announced I will allow time for you to look it up in your Bibles, or on your Bible Apps or Bible Gateway and follow the reading. We use the New International Version (UK).

Today we begin a slightly altered order of service, one I had been planning since the New Year to begin after Easter. We move the Psalm to the beginning of the service and will normally be led by one of our young people as a Call to Worship.

So, let us pray the St George's Prayer:

*Our Father, as individuals and as a community may we come to know and love you more and more, may we feel your love and care through each other, may we be witnesses to Christ wherever we are, and by the power of your Holy Spirit, may we be attentive to you, to our neighbour and to your world.*

The Easter Announcement

**Alleluia! Christ is risen**

**He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

🎵 **CALL TO WORSHIP** 🎵 **HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR US** How vast beyond all measure  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSWC7XozVgY>

**TODAY'S PSALM is PSALM 23** A psalm of David.

*if you are following this service on paper why not read this antiphonally as we do in church? That means taking turns ... young and old, or male and female, or one and the rest?*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,

<sup>3</sup> he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen***

## **THE GREETING**

We come together in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Faithful one, whose word is life: come with saving power to free our praise, inspire our prayer and shape our lives for the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

♪ **SONG OF CELEBRATION** ♪ - *Particularly for the Sunday School* **GOD YOU'RE GOOD TO ME**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IQUXJ\\_H16Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IQUXJ_H16Y)

### CONFESSION

✠ In baptism we died with Christ, so that as Christ was raised from the dead, we might walk in newness of life. Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you  
in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.**

**ABSOLUTION** *is pronounced and all respond:*

✠ The Lord enrich *you* with his grace, and nourish *you* with his blessing; the Lord defend *you* in trouble and keep *you* from all evil; the Lord accept *your* prayers, and absolve *you* from *your* offences, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. **Amen.**

*In response we join in the words* **GLORIA:**

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God,  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

♪ **A SONG OF PRAISE** ♪ *We sing a song of adoration:* **WHO IS THERE LIKE YOU**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYkce-EhNuQ>

### THE 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**

### THE WORD OF GOD

✠ **THE FIRST READING ACTS 2.42-47**

<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves **to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.** <sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe at the **many wonders and signs** performed by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup> They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. <sup>46</sup> **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, <sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number **daily** those who were being saved.

***This is the Word of the Lord, Thanks be to God***

✘ THE SECOND READING 1 PETER 2.19-25

<sup>19</sup> For it is **commendable** if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering **because they are conscious of God.** <sup>20</sup> But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is **commendable before God.** <sup>21</sup> To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, **that you should follow in his steps.** <sup>22</sup> **“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”** <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> **“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.” <sup>25</sup> For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have **returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.**

**This is the Word of the Lord, Thanks be to God**

♪ **HYMN** ♪ *to prepare for the story of our Lord* I KNOW A PLACE  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kYOY6vH5zU>

✘ THE GOSPEL JOHN 10:1-10

**Hear the Gospel of the Lord according to St John, Glory to you O Lord**

**“Very truly I tell you** Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup> The one who enters by the gate is **the shepherd of the sheep.** <sup>3</sup> **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.** <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him **because they know his voice.** <sup>5</sup> But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” <sup>6</sup> Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them. <sup>7</sup> Therefore Jesus said again, **“Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.** <sup>8</sup> All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. <sup>9</sup> **I am the gate;** whoever enters through me will be saved.<sup>[a]</sup> They will come in and go out, and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; **I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.**

**This is the Gospel of our Lord, Praise you O Christ**

**SERMON SHEEP AND SHEPHERDS**

*May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight,  
O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

**INTRODUCTION**

- ✘ Sheep, Shepherds: caring, feeding - what words come to your mind when you think of sheep and shepherds?
- ✘ I think of white dots on hillsides – for me beautiful memories
- ✘ I think of animals which love to do just whatever they want even when it's not for their best – and I think how often have I been like this!
- ✘ I think of one sheep I came across, while walking in Scotland that had ended up on its back and couldn't get back onto her feet. She would have died unless I was able to push it back so that it could live again – only on its right legs could its perspective be what it should be, thus giving it the strength it needed.
- ✘ I think about the time I was a nine year old boy working in a cattle market during my holidays – for money from the farmers to buy ice-creams. One day, one sheep got by me and then of course

all the rest of the sheep followed. Was that sheep making a dart for freedom or was it just because it was a place for them to go and they all went together? This is just like sheep!

✘ I have an enormous respect for shepherds. My experience of them was as people who enjoyed their own company, who were used to solitariness – often they were poets – but people who were intently aware of what was around them.

✘ For most of the sheep's life, the shepherd is to protect that sheep, to make sure that it is not taken by an animal, or the lambs not taken by eagles. His or her job as a shepherd is to make sure that the sheep is kept safe.

✘ Whenever I think about shepherds, I think of sheepdogs. My grandparents had a collie called Corrie. We for nearly 14 years had a collie-cross called Biggles (he died in 2012) and our neighbours in France have a number of working collies. Intelligent, active and hard-working animals.

✘ Once in London, we played a trick on Biggles. If we were out walking he would run round us ensuring we kept together. Once we were walking, with some friends and deliberately walked away from each other. He ran round and round us trying to bring us together. Eventually he gave up and lay down in the middle of the field!

✘ Sheepdogs are not in the Bible – but I sometimes think that the Bible is like a sheepdog. It is used by the Shepherd to keep us on the right path, to hone our consciences, and to enable us to keep on the right path.

So, a long introduction today ... I wanted to stir your imagination!

In Psalm 23 and John 10 the Lord is presented as our Shepherd ... another instance where Christ makes himself equal to God.

In these days of being set apart from normal life I find it a great encouragement that there is a Shepherd who knows exactly my situation and is not overawed by it. Psalm 23 is a Psalm that I have read at many many funerals. It is a Psalm that for so many, gives comfort and stillness. I think it is a Psalm of shalom – a Psalm that bring peace into our inner being.

Notice what the Shepherd does: he gives a context of safety. I gather that sheep do not lie down if they are anxious – and they only drink from gentle-flowing waters. They are only refreshed when they feel safe. The shepherd is the one that brings them to this place of safety – he leads, he refreshes, he guides – he is there! This is such a frequent promise of Scripture and I believe is one to reflect on daily in these days. The Psalm tells us that we do not have to fear any evil. A number of times in our ministry Deborah and I have prepared people for dying. We have seen people become quiet and still as they deeply felt that God was with them in their extremity. As they focussed on the Good Shepherd, by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, they found comfort.

But the Psalm is not really about death, it is about life. It is about feasting, anointing, overflowing cups ... it is about abundance! No wonder it finishes with *<sup>6</sup> Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

Goodness and love are two key Hebrew words. *Tov* is good - as in *mazel tov* ... good fortune .. a cry of blessing. I came across an excellent article on *tov* entitled *TOV: good, beautiful, working the way it's supposed to* – look it up on Google. Everything God made was *tov*. Jesus is the *tov* shepherd ... when we wish someone *good morning*, we are wishing them *tov* – what we are really saying, although we don't think of it this way, is: may today be a day that is good, beautiful and may your life be as God intended it to be. Let us live! One article I read says the word 'good' appears over 800 times in the Bible.

The other word is Chesed. There is no direct translation .. we need a lot of English words to communicate this - mercy, steadfast love, loving kindness, compassion, faithfulness, kindly, loyal – are some of the meanings I came up with.

Jennie our youth worker was telling me that she was reading that the word for follow is really *pursue* or *chase*. I checked it out and she was right. It is the word used of Pharaoh chasing the Israelites as they headed for the Red Sea. God keeps coming, we may try to wander, he chases us; we may try to hide from him, he chases us. We cannot escape God! Because God is *tov* and *chesed* – this is good news – which is what *Gospel* means – *tov* again. This is the God of the Bible – from Genesis to Revelation. God is good and God is love. That is our Good Shepherd.

How does this fit in with our other readings? Acts tells us that the Christians lived together like this ... they *devoted themselves*, they were serious about their community life which consisted of listening and learning, mutual commitment (fellowship), breaking of bread (perhaps and including meals but from earliest times had a liturgical meaning of the revelation of Christ in Communion as at Emmaus), they prayed, they cared practically for each other ... and they saw God at work transforming lives. They met together, they worshipped (temple courts), they celebrated and they did it all with *glad and sincere hearts!* These were a people of quality ~ the quality of God. Pentecost had just happened and they were filled with the Spirit. To be the people of God, the “Spirit - filled” people of Jesus, included a commitment to each other.

So, as our reading in 1 Peter says: For “*you were like sheep going astray,*” but now you have ***returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***

To be a Christian we have to recognise that we have gone astray, that we are incapable in ourselves of living that *tov*, that *good* life that God intended. SO we return to our Shepherd and today we say, *My Lord, I need you, be my Shepherd, I submit myself to your leading, I worship you for your goodness, your steadfast love, your faithfulness to me. Enable me to live in the light of this and to treat others as you treat me. May I follow in your steps.*

I finish with some of the words of Jesus from John chapter 10 where Jesus is both the Shepherd and the Door or Gate to the sheepfold: **the shepherd of the sheep .. the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.** <sup>4</sup> ... he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him **because they know his voice.** <sup>5</sup>., “**Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.** <sup>9</sup> **I am the door; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.**

✘ But we can live with a sense of scarcity, a sense of poverty when in fact we are rich. This is a picture of people who live with a sense of abundance. The Lord is the Shepherd ... Jesus is the Shepherd ... Jesus is the Lord. Remember Jesus is both the shepherd and the gate for the sheep. *I have come that they may have life and have it to the full* - nothing boring, nothing unexciting but passionate joyful and vital. This is life ... another Hebrew word *Chaim* – when a glass of wine is taken and we say *Cheers*, a Jew says *L’Chaim* - *to life!* CS Lewis said *Why play with mud-pies when you can build sand castles on the beach?*

✦ This is for any age – my father at 94 limited by sight and by social restrictions said to me last week – John, I don’t think I have ever been happier! It is not our outside circumstances ... it is our inward reality. May God help live in *tov* and *chesed* ... in goodness and steadfast love.

**Let us pray:** Lord, may we live consciously in the light of your resurrection victory. May we know the passion of your fire and celebrate your Gospel. May the light of your presence set our hearts on fire with love for you. Shine into our hearts, O God, and kindle in us the fire of your love.

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen**

✠ *In response to God's Word we join together in the* **THE APOSTLES' CREED** –

*This is what we believe.*

**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.**

### **A TIME OF PRAYER**

🎵 ***O Lord, hear my prayer*** 🎵 *may be sung*

*To the words: Lord, in your mercy the response is:* **hear our prayer**

**We take time to pray for:**

- The world
- Our neighbourhoods
- The wider church
- St George's Andorra and Barcelona

Jesus, our Lord, we praise you that nothing could keep you dead in the grave.  
You are stronger than death and the devil.  
Help us to remember that there is nothing to be afraid of,  
because you are alive and by our side.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our Prayer**

You come to the disciples by the lakeside,  
and turn their failure into faith.  
You come to your people now,  
and turn our weakness into triumph.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our Prayer**

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy. Sustain and support the anxious,  
be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our Prayer**

Ever present God, be with us in our isolation, be close to us in our distancing,  
be healing in our sickness, be joy in our sadness, be light in our darkness,  
be wisdom in our confusion, be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,  
that when the doors reopen we may with the zeal of Pentecost inhabit our communities  
and speak of your goodness to an emerging world. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our Prayer**

Look in your mercy upon the world you love so much  
We pray for those who are in need; for the sick, sorrowful and bereaved,  
for those in darkness, in doubt and in despair, in loneliness and in fear,  
We pray for all who bring comfort, care and healing.  
We give thanks for human love and friendship  
and for all that enriches our daily lives.  
Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our Prayer**

***In the quietness bring before God those who are in your heart***

Merciful God, we commend into your hands those who have departed this life. You gave them breath and loved them through their journey of life. Receive them now at the end of that journey into your eternal presence and may they rest in everlasting peace. *(Short Silence)*  
Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our Prayer**

Everlasting God, in so many ways you have taught us that you alone can be trusted, even when it might seem that you are far away from us. Help us to remember this fact and feel your loving presence as we go from this time of worship and return to our everyday lives walking obediently in the light of your truth in all that we do this and every day.

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

**Minister** Almighty and everlasting God,  
the comfort of the sad, the strength of those who suffer:  
hear the prayers of your children who cry out of any trouble,  
and to every distressed soul grant mercy, relief and refreshment,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***Holy Communion – The Lord feeds us***

**THE PEACE**

✠ We are the body of Christ.  
In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.  
Let us then pursue all that makes for peace  
and builds up our common life.  
The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*All may exchange a sign of peace*

**AS WE OFFER OURSELVES TO THE LORD AS WE COME TO HIS TABLE**

- Normally the gifts of the people are gathered at this time. During this seclusion our giving can be via the Website or by Standing Order ... or TransferWise ... and information on this is also on the website. St George's needs your ongoing support as our costs continue even when we cannot have services here. We are looking at ways to make giving online easier.

🎵 **OFFERTORY HYMN** 🎵 **FATHER HEAR THE PRAYER WE OFFER**

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

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

✠ Be present, be present,  
Lord Jesus Christ, our risen high priest;  
make yourself known in the breaking of bread.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER – #B

*When I say Alleluia* the response is **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

The Lord is here **His presence is with us**  
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

We give you thanks and praise  
for the gospel we have received.  
Christ died for our sins. **Alleluia. He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Death comes to all through Adam,  
and sin reigns for a time.  
New life without end comes through Christ,  
and he reigns for ever. **Alleluia. He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Death, where is your victory?  
Death, where is your sting?  
Death is swallowed up in victory,  
the victory you give us in Christ. **Alleluia. He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

We have been crucified with Christ,  
and live his risen life,  
to praise you for ever with angels and archangels saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
[Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.]**

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;  
**grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
and according to your holy will,  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;**

who, in the same night that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
**Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.**

In the same way, after supper  
he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:

**Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.**

*An acclamations is used*

Great is the mystery of faith

**Christ has died:**

**Christ is risen:**

**Christ will come again.**

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,  
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;  
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,  
and looking for his coming in glory,  
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.  
As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,  
we bring before you this bread and this cup  
and we thank you for counting us worthy  
to stand in your presence and serve you.

**Send the Holy Spirit on your people**

and gather into one in your kingdom  
all who share this one bread and one cup,  
so that we, in the company of all the saints,  
may praise and glorify you for ever,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

**Blessing and honour and glory and power  
be yours for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

#### **THE COMMUNION**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.  
**Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

## **GIVING OF COMMUNION**

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you, and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,  
blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

**The body of Christ broken for you**

**The blood of Christ shed for you**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION** *Together we say:*

Living God, your Son made himself known to his disciples  
in the breaking of bread:  
open the eyes of our faith,  
that we may see him in all his redeeming work;  
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

**Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you  
our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

## ***The Dismissal – The Lord sends us out***

### **FINAL HYMN**

**THE LORD'S MY SHEPHERD (I WILL TRUST)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eIQQayhpak>

## **BLESSING**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.  
Alleluia. Christ is risen!  
Alleluia. Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed, Alleluia!  
He is risen indeed, Alleluia!  
He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, banish all darkness from your hearts and minds.

May the risen Christ grant you the joy of eternal life.

May Christ the risen one be yours, and be your reality, and your experience.

May you know in your lives the presence of the risen Lord,  
the peace of Christ which is eternal, and the power of the resurrection.

and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit  
be among you and remain with you always.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord Alleluia! Alleluia!  
**In the name of Christ. Alleluia! Alleluia!**