



EASTER 4 - SUNDAY 03 MAY 2020 - THE PARABLE OF THE SHEPHERD - JOHN 10:1-10

CALL TO WORSHIP - The King of Love My Shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never, I nothing lack if I am His and He is mine forever.

Prayer & Lord's Prayer

Heavenly father as we draw near to you this day, still our souls as we prepare to listen to you, may the Holy Spirit open our hearts to receive your word. Forgive us for any actions we may have taken recently and any thoughts, although they don't reach our tongues, but can hurt our inmost being. May you grant us patience at this time. We thank you for Jesus teaching us how to pray, as He taught the disciples to say Our Father...

REFLECTION - Before the tighter restrictions, during a recent walk, I was amazed to see that the world of man and the world nature both in action. There was construction all around, machinery, cranes, diggers & trucks preparing for new housing and 3 schools at Winchburgh.



What a contrast from the construction site on one side to the quiet country road on the other, **God's Creation** - where there were imminent signs of new life, new growth, daffodils blooming, new buds on the trees, the **birds constructing** their homes/nests, their beaks full of twigs and straw, one in fact with sheep's wool.

While on my walk I took a photo of a Jacob sheep, the breed native to Scotland, with their unusual markings, piebald—dark-coloured with areas of white wool. They were going about their early feed of grass, **but here was no shepherd sight!**



In our reading, Jesus explains the parable to the Pharisees about how a shepherd can go through the gate, the Watchman who would have been there all night allows him in, **the Shepherd calls on his sheep by name**, goes out ahead and they will **follow him**.

Not quite like that nowadays, as according to my brother and niece, both shepherds. The sheep are rounded up with their dogs, sometimes using their quad bikes (not the dogs - the shepherds 😊) During the winter months and lambing time, they have extra food, they will come to a shout or a the shake of the bucket but never any other time.

So how were these sheep different or what was Jesus trying to explain to the Pharisees? Jesus explained this parable so that the Pharisees might understand, but they didn't, so then he makes it quite clear,

John 10:1 Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber.

He said **John 10:9 - I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture.**



Jesus wants us to follow Him.

The teaching seems to reflect a time when people (already followers of Jesus) are being tempted to follow others: but the reading is warning that only true followers of Jesus will ultimately be saved/kept safe. Perhaps the reading is speaking to a time in the early church when there was great pressure on believers

John 10:1-10 Good News Translation (GNT)

The Parable of the Shepherd

10 Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. **2** The man who goes in through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. **3** The gatekeeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out. **4** When he has brought them out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. **5** They will not follow someone else; instead, they will run away from such a person, because they do not know his voice."

6 Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he meant.

Jesus the Good Shepherd

7 So Jesus said again, "I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep. **8** All others who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. **9** I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture. **10** The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness.

to turn away from their beliefs: maybe there is a debate going on about what is true faith, or they are being persecuted by those in authority or it might be more about judgement on those who try to lead others astray, than about warning believers to stick with Jesus.



In the song, *Written by John L. Bell 1987 - Will you come and follow me if I just call your name? It is a Summons!* In last verse :

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.

Prayer:

Lord, in a world when many search for the protection you offer, for a shepherd to welcome them in and to sit by their side, we bring our prayers for others.

We pray for those who wonder where their next meal will come from.

We pray for the day when we might see our families again.

We pray for those who wonder when they might be able to fully support their family, as countries build their economies once again.

We pray for all those who wonder where their help might come from, and we pray for communities that mirror your love and care.

For all looking for the shelter of a shepherd we pray for your presence to be known. Lord we thank you for providing for us, during these difficult circumstances and we remember those struggling at this time.

In a moment of silent prayer - We lift those we name before you, countries world wide in this pandemic and those mostly affected including our family/friends, NHS, front line workers, Governments, Scientists, those in isolation, those ill, recovering and especially those mourning the loss of loved ones. We ask this in the Jesus name we pray. Amen

Congratulations

To Marion & Malcolm Grabham on their Golden Wedding Anniversary

As we continue our journey through the Easter season towards Pentecost, there is perhaps no better time to consider the resurrection message in a fresh way, listen for the voice of the Shepherd reminding us of where He is, and where He wants us to go.

Its not easy to listen or hear for Jesus' voice.

It reminds me of a recent TV report about sounds in lockdown. The reporter was in inner city London, listening to the different sounds, for the first time he could hear **BIRDSONG** - The birds are normally there, but they are drowned out by other sounds like traffic, trains & humans. We just have to pay more attention to hear the birds and to hear Jesus as he Speaks to us.

Jesus was saying, if you do not listen to my voice and follow me you are unable to enter through the gate. He said **"I am the gate for the sheep"**

When we step back through "St Nicholas Church gate" or our own church gate let us continue through **"The Gate"**, Listening to the voice of Jesus and following Him. Amen

BLESSING - The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you, the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you Peace.



Hymn - Will you come and Follow Me

1. 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
2. Will you leave yourself 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
3. 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.

CCLI Song # 4668756 Graham Maule | John L. Bell © Words: 1987 WGRG, c/o Iona Community, Glasgow, Scotland (Admin. by Wild Goose Resource Group) Music: 1987 WGRG, c/o Iona Community, Glasgow, Scotland (Admin. by Wild Goose Resource Group)

Wash our hands:

Keep your social distancing.

Remember one another in prayer

Give a friend / neighbour a telephone call

"I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture." John 10:9

Order of Service

WELCOME - Congratulations to Marion and Malcolm Grabham on their Golden wedding anniversary - **Muriel**

CALL TO WORSHIP - The King of Love My Shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never, I nothing lack if I am His and He is mine forever. - **Muriel**

PRAYER & LORDS PRAYER - Heavenly father as we draw near to you this day, still our souls as we prepare to listen to you, may the Holy Spirit open our hearts to receive your word. Forgive us for any actions we may have taken recently and any thoughts, although they don't reach our tongues, but can hurt our inmost being. May you grant us patience at this time. We thank you for Jesus teaching us how to pray, as He taught the disciples to say Our Father... - **Muriel**

READING - Tom - John 10:1-10 Good News Translation (GNT)

The Parable of the Shepherd

10 Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The man who goes in through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out. 4 When he has brought them out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. 5 They will not follow someone else; instead, they will run away from such a person, because they do not know his voice."

6 Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he meant.

Jesus the Good Shepherd

7 So Jesus said again, "I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All others who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness.

REFLECTION - Parable of the Shepherd - Nurtured Ones - **Muriel**

PRAYER FOR OTHERS - **Rhona** - Lord, in a world when many search for the protection you offer, for a shepherd to welcome them in and to sit by their side, we bring our prayers for others.

We pray for those who wonder where their next meal will come from.

We pray for the day when we might see our families again.

We pray for those who wonder when they might be able to fully support their family, as countries build their economies once again.

We pray for all those who wonder where their help might come from, and we pray for communities that mirror your love and care.

For all looking for the shelter of a shepherd we pray for your presence to be known. Lord we thank you for providing for us, during these difficult circumstances and we remember those struggling at this time.

In a moment of silent prayer - We lift those we name before you, countries in this pandemic and those mostly affected including:- our family/friends, NHS & Carers, front line workers, Governments, Scientists, those in isolation, those ill, recovering and especially those mourning the loss of loved ones. We ask this in the Jesus name we pray. Amen

HYMN - Will You Come and Follow Me - **Share D/T**

BLESSING - The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you, the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you Peace. **Muriel**