

**Worship at Home Service 21st April 2024**  
**Prepared by Gloria Manning South Molton / Ringsash**

Jesus Said "I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD "

**Read Tog. Psalm 23.**

**Singing the Faith 297 Christ is alive, let Christians sing**

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| 1 Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.<br>The cross stands empty to the sky.<br>Let streets and homes with praises ring.<br>Love, drowned in death, shall never die. | 2 Christ is alive! No longer bound<br>to distant years in Palestine,<br>but saving, healing, here and now,<br>and touching every place and time.         |
| 3 In every insult, rift and war,<br>where colour, scorn or wealth divide,<br>Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,<br>and lives, where even hope has died.        | 4 Women and men, in age and youth,<br>can feel the Spirit, hear the call,<br>and find the way, the life, the truth,<br>revealed in Jesus, freed for all. |
| 5 Christ is alive and comes to bring<br>good news to this and every age,<br>till earth and sky and ocean ring<br>with joy, with justice, love, and praise.            |  |

*Brian Wren (b. 1936)*

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Let us pray --- Thank you Lord that we can worship together. whether alone or with others. Celebrating the Joy of Easter and Your glorious Resurrection Day. Thank you for your loving care and protection. For the time that you have made yourself known to us. In times of sorrow, grief and illness, you are the caring Shepherd.

Take the words of this hour, let them be your words, and by your guidance, wing them to many a heart. In the precious name of Jesus, AMEN

THE LORDS PRAYER

**Gospel Reading ST. JOHN CH. 10 v. 11 - 18.**

We will use these beautiful words as a meditation or to sing ----- **All in the April Evening**

All in the April evening, April airs are abroad  
The sheep with their little lambs, passed me by on the road  
The sheep with their little lambs, passed me by on the road  
All in the April evening, I thought on the lamb of God.

The lambs were weary and crying, with a weak human cry.  
I thought on the Lamb of God, going meekly to die.  
Up in the blue, blue mountains Dewy pastures are sweet.  
Rest for the little bodies, Rest for the little feet.

But for the lamb, the Lamb of God. Up on the hilltop green.  
Only a Cross, a Cross of shame. Two stark Crosses between.  
All in the April evening, April airs were abroad  
I saw the sheep with the lambs, and thought on the Lamb of God.

*Source ---Musixmatch ---- Hugh Stevenson Roberton*

## Prayers of confession and Forgiveness

Lord Jesus, you have commanded your Church to feed your sheep, and yet millions of our brothers and sisters are hungry and our own society is Spiritually impoverished.

You came to bring good news to the poor, but we still measure human beings by their wealth and possessions.

You came to set the captives free and yet, all over the world men and women who stand up for their beliefs are in prison, with little hope of release.

You came to give sight, yet we who hear your name still willfully shut our eyes to the things we have no desire to see.

Risen Lord, we confess to you our blindness our selfishness, our apathy, our faltering witness and our hesitating service.

Grant us this day your forgiveness and your love that we may live your Risen Life, and truly care for your sheep.

Until the day when the whole earth shall call you Lord and praise your Holy Name. AMEN

## REFLECTION

“There shall be one flock and one Shepherd “

A flock of sheep owned and controlled by one shepherd or farmer, are very alike and are content to be together. Often bred in the same environment and with the same blood line. They have established natural leaders. Often staying on the same farm most of their life. Put a stranger among them and it does not look the same. Someone said “all sheep look alike “They certainly do not. A flock on the whole is usually quite content with their shepherd. They know His/ her voice. Of course there are always those who are stubborn, disobedient, the run aways, the strays, those who will find a hole in which to escape. The shepherd knows them all. The true Shepherd loves them all and makes allowances for them.

A deep Spiritual truth here, spelt out for each one of us. Jesus said “My sheep hear my voice, a stranger they will not follow.”

I have quite a few books on sheep and shepherds. One by a New Zealand person by the name of Godfrey Bowen A committed Christian, who has traveled worldwide. Won Sheep shearing records and in his book published 1988 has this very poignant poem.

Tw as a sheep, not a lamb that went astray in the parable that Jesus told.

Tw as a sheep that wandered away from the ninety and nine in the fold.

And out on the hilltops and out in the cold

Tw as a sheep that the Good Shepherd brought back to the fold,

Now why should the sheep be so carefully fed and cared for today?

Because there is a danger if they go wrong, they will lead the lambs astray.

For the lambs will follow the sheep you know.

Where ever they wander, where ever they go. If the sheep go wrong, it will not be long,

Till the lambs are as wrong as they.

So still with the sheep we must earnestly plead, for the sake of the lambs today.

If the lambs are lost what terrible cost, some sheep will have to pay,

What a stark truth there is in that poem.

By our example, by our love, by our care by our witness, what do the lambs of today see? A world that seems to have lost its way. Where human dignity and respect is sadly lacking so often. What are the sheep doing.

All can hear the Shepherds voice in Worship. THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME, and His voice of commission, Love one another as I have loved you.

What a flock. Each Sunday or Sabbath all around the world One flock, coming together to Worship the One Good Shepherd. To be nourished, to be fed, to drink of the water of life. What a joy to be part of that flock. Yes there is still illness there are still problems, There are disappointments But we have the good Shepherd to guide us. To hear our prayers. We often have to walk in the valley. He has been there before us. Call to Him, He is near.

As Christians we need the fellowship of those who follow the same path. Let our love and compassion be a witness to the care and forgiveness of our Saviour and Redeemer.

In St John Ch. 3 v. 16 God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes on Him shall not perish but have eternal life. AMEN

## Prayers of care for others and ourselves

Lord, we come with many concerns laid upon us. We pray for all known to us who are in distress, some with worries of loved ones. Some with worries of illness. Those who are homeless, those who have financial difficulties. In a moment of quiet we will think of these.

Silence

As we hear the news, we see a hurting world, Lord we pray for those in authority over us. Our leaders, our politicians, a society that seems to have lost the honesty that should be an example to all young people. We pray for those who are Christian in leadership, that they have courage to stand for right.

Silence

We pray for all the warring countries we pray for peace. For the victims of all unrest  
We pray for ourselves that we may set an example by not just words but how we live,  
This we ask in Jesus Name. AMEN

## **Singing the Faith 481 The Lords my Shepherd.** (to the more modern tune)

1 The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;  
he makes me lie in pastures green,  
he leads me by the still, still waters,  
his goodness restores my soul.

*Chorus:*

*And I will trust in you alone,  
and I will trust in you alone,  
for your endless mercy follows me,  
your goodness will lead me home.*

2 He guides my ways in righteousness,  
and he anoints my head with oil;  
and my cup -- it overflows with joy,  
I feast on his pure delights.

3 And though I walk the darkest path --  
I will not fear the evil one,  
for you are with me, and your rod and staff  
are the comfort I need to know.

*Stuart Townend (b. 1963)*

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May the Blessing of God and the Love of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit surround you and protect you, now and always. AMEN

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