



Worship from home

Service sheet – Sunday 3 May 2020

These materials are provided for you to use at home, knowing that others across the circuit and beyond are sharing with you in worship. The service will be led by the Revd Naomi Oates at 10.30 on Sunday 3 May – if you are able, please join us on the live stream (see www.nkmethodists.org.uk/news/invitation-to-worship-from-home.html). Otherwise, please use the materials however you find helpful.

Some of the material in this service sheet has been provided by the Ministries: Vocations & Worship Team of the Methodist Church (with original materials by Pamela Cram) and will be used by others worshipping from home across the Connexion.

Opening words

Jesus said: 'I am the Good Shepherd.' Loving God, help us to listen for his voice offering comfort and safety.

Prayers of adoration and confession

Let us pray.

Jesus, you told us that you are the good shepherd; the one who will lead us into green pastures and whose goodness will restore our souls. Lead us, this day, in our thoughts, words and prayers, so that we might worship you in spirit and in truth, and so that our whole lives might be a sacrifice of praise, worthy of your name.

Jesus, you told us that you are the bread of life. In these strange and difficult times, we have so much for which we need to give thanks. We praise you for the ways in which you have nourished and sustained us and for the daily bread you offer us.

Jesus, you told us that you are the resurrection and the life. In this Easter season, we offer you our praises because you have defeated the powers of sin and death and set us free so that we might have life in all its fullness. In times of fear and uncertainty, in the face of illness and even death, we place our trust in you, knowing that death could not hold you, and that we can share with you in the glory of new life.

Jesus, you told us that you are the way, the truth and the life. But we know that there have been times when we have followed our own way; when we have ignored your truth because of the demands it makes on our lives; when we have failed to strive for life in all its fullness for all your children. Forgive us, guide us, and help us to trust you for all that is to come.

To all who call on his name, this is Christ's gracious word: 'Your sins are forgiven.' Amen. Thanks to be to God.

Hymn: The Lord's my shepherd (Singing the Faith no. 481)

If you are not able to tune into the live stream, you could read or sing the words, and/or listen to this version: www.youtube.com/watch?v=pN4tPkXOMGO

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.

*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.*

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.

And I will trust...

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.

And I will trust...

Stuart Townend © 1996 Thankyou Music

Today's reading from the Old Testament: Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Today's Gospel reading: John 10:1-11

[Jesus said] "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. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

Sermon (see separate document)

Pause to reflect

If you are using these materials at home, pause to reflect on these questions. If you are worshipping with others, you might like to share your thoughts:

- Has this period of lockdown felt more like a green pasture or a valley? Have you experienced both, perhaps? During this time, where and how have you experienced the presence of God?
- How might you help to ensure ‘life in all its fullness’ for those around you? What about people in the world you will never meet – how might your choices have an impact?
- What are you thankful for this week?
- For whom would you like to pray?

Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession

Our prayers will be led by some of our children and young people. The video of the live-streamed service, including their prayers, will be available on YouTube afterwards.

We continue in prayer for the world around us.

Let us pray for our world in crisis,
a crisis that has brought out the best and the worst in humanity.

We give thanks for those who are offering help in so many ways to those in need and pray for those who, in their fear, have acted less generously.

We give thanks for all the keyworkers who have worked tirelessly in medical and care sectors; for Local Authority and community teams; production and distribution, and pray for those now idle, anxious, and depressed due to the closures.

We give thanks for positive voices, encouraging and nurturing others in so many ways, and pray for those whose voices bring ‘fake’ advice and false testimony.

We take a moment to bring before God those on our hearts and minds today...

Good Shepherd of the sheep,
by whom the lost are sought
and guided into the fold:
feed us and we shall be satisfied;
heal us and we shall be made whole,
and lead us, that we may be with you;
for you are alive and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Easter from *The Methodist Worship Book*

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Hymn

In Christ Alone by the National Methodist Choir: <https://youtu.be/oKJfs8C14yc>

If you are unable to listen to the hymn online, sing or listen to one of your favourite hymns.

A prayer of blessing

I come into your sheep-fold this day, to find the rest I need. When the new day comes, I will follow you through green pastures and beside still waters. May your goodness and mercy follow me all the days of my life. Amen.