

+ Crowe Hill + Fordingbridge + Horton Heath + Ringwood +

Sunday Service 18th July 2021

Welcome to this Sunday's Service

Today's Lectionary Texts:

Jeremiah 23:1–6 Psalm 23 Ephesians 2:11–22 Mark 6:30–34, 53–56

Theme: Jesus the shepherd who cares

Keeping in Touch

GENERAL – IMPORTANT – please read

Emerging from Covid restrictions. You will be aware that the Government has already released some indications of what may happen after 19th July but the exact details have yet to be confirmed. As churches we need to continue in the way we are operating until we know more and have guidance from our denominations, the URC and Methodist Churches.

When guidance is confirmed the leadership of each of our churches will need to meet and decide how they see best to move forward. You will then be informed. Until advised otherwise please be prepared to wear a face mask, stay socially distanced and no singing.

The four churches under the leadership of Revd Mike Shrubsole have opened for worship. Please refer to details under each church. Mike will continue to produce email or paper copies of the weekly worship on a weekly basis for the foreseeable future. At some point we will need to consider the value of continuing with this, but be assured that you will be asked.

GENERAL PRAYER

Pray for the leadership of the churches for the way forward as restrictions lift helping each to discern what is wisest for each church. Help us as churches to reflect on the past year and learn positively from the new experiences and to approach the way ahead with an open mind as we are led prayerfully by God.

TRINITY RINGWOOD

SUNDAY WORSHIP 10.45am every Sunday

Sunday 18th July Worship led by Mr Mark Priestley

Sunday 25th July 10.45 am Worship led by Revd Mike Shrubsole

6.00 pm Evening worship with Communion at the Trinity Church led by Revd Pauline Crispin (please note not a Wesley)

Drink-Chat-Pray It was decided not to continue with this weekly, the next time will be 5th August, Thursday at 10.30am. Zoom details will be circulated. We take time to gradually pray through the church directory, individual and church concerns. If you have something you would like to be prayed for but feel the meeting is a bit far away, please do not hesitate to contact Louise who will circulate your concern immediately. Prayer in the life of the church is important.

NEW SOCIAL GATHERING OPPORTUNITY – CUPPA AND CHAT – dates for your diary During the summer months we are planning to open Trinity Hall for Cuppa and Chat on alternate Tuesday afternoons, from 2.00 to 4.00 pm. TUESDAY 20th JULY and 3rd, 17th AUGUST. The first one was received very positively. We have all missed the opportunity to socialise in a relaxed atmosphere and wanted to provide a place for it. Open to all, you may wish to invite a friend to join you. Please get the word around and encourage each other to come along. We continue to be mindful of the Covid regulations and initially will have to restrict numbers to 6 at a table. You will be asked for your name for Track and Trace, please wear a mask when you enter but it can be taken off once seated.

LITTLE LAMBS and ECO CLUB are taking a break for the summer. Please pray for Jackie and the team as they consider the way forward for September. Particularly in Little Lambs we feel we have benefited from smaller group size enabling us to chat to the families in a more supportive way.

TRINITY PRAYER FOCUS - Give thanks that both Les H and Doreen W are now home from hospital. Alison F gives thanks that her daughter Kat is responding well to physiotherapy advice. We pray for both Audrey G and Jan C who have had recent falls and are in hospital both are making progress. Our prayers continue with Delphine and Bob following the death of their 3 year old great grandson Oscar. We remember the whole family.

TRINITY Annual General Meeting – Sunday 8th August, after morning worship. Please put this important date in your diary and take this as a personal invitation to you. It is an important gathering to review the life of the church, give thanks for things that have gone well and to seek God's will for the way forward. We continue to be in inbetween times following Covid and there are significant items to discuss. Mike is reprinting the post holders list and roles and vacancies within the church – please consider prayerfully thinking about your place in the fellowship and whether God is calling you to support and help. Please encourage each other, chat and pray. There are a considerable number of vacancies on the Executive Council – this is the management group of the church for both physical and spiritual matters. It would be helpful if you could contact Mike to confirm your roles before he has to contact you. Another item will be confirming charitable giving for the year ahead. Please let Louise know ahead of time if you would like a charity considered, she is gathering suggestions.

WESLEY CHURCH GARDEN Alan appreciated the support for those who came and helped cut back and tidy up the garden at the back of the Wesley Centre. Sincere thanks.

CROWE HILL

SUNDAY WORSHIP on a weekly basis, 10.30am and 3.00pm

Sunday 18th July 10.30 am Brian Skelley
3.00 pm Jenny Yates

Sunday 25th July 10.30 am Louise Shrubsole
3.00 pm Revd Mike Shrubsole

The Church will open for PRIVATE PRAYER each Wednesday from 2.00pm to 4.00pm. You will be made most welcome.

HORTON HEATH

SUNDAY WORSHIP on a weekly basis at 10.45am.

Sunday 18th July Worship with Communion led by Revd Mike Shrubsole

Sunday 25th July Worship led by Revd Elizabeth Rundle

WORDSHOP will re convene after the summer break – next meeting date 21st September, which will be by Zoom.

PRAYER FOCUS Please prayer for Molly, a very faithful member who is in hospital seriously ill. Unfortunately the family are restricted and not able to visit, this is causing them all distress. Our thoughts and prayers are with Molly and all the family.

FORDINGBRIDGE

SUNDAY WORSHIP 10.30am on a twice monthly basis (1st and 3rd Sundays).

Sunday 18th July Worship led by Eddie Martin of Myra's Wells.

Sunday 1st August Worship with Communion led by Revd Mike Shrubsole – Communion Offertory for Myra's Wells.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING An important date for your diary – Sunday 1st August – following worship 11.30am. Please make every effort to attend. It is a very important meeting in the life of the church to seek God's will and take stock for the future of all the activities. You will be aware that there are very limited people involved in the leadership. Please prayerfully consider and encourage one another, how could you serve the life of the church. Nomination forms for Eldership are now available.

T-STOP Support Group – each Thursday afternoon from 2.00 – 4.00pm. You will be made most welcome.

PRAYER FOCUS We continue to pray for the Winter family, David, Cathryn and Richard and all their family as they make preparation for Eileen's funeral on Friday 30th July. Information will be updated as it becomes available.

WEDDING CONGRATUALIONS – We continue to pray for George and Kirsty following their wedding at church last week. Family and friends were very complimentary of the warm welcome and the relaxed celebratory atmosphere in the church.

Call to Worship

Shout for joy to the Lord all the earth
Worship the Lord with gladness,
come before him with joyful songs.
Know that the Lord is God,
It is he who has made us and we are his.
We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him and praise his name. *(from Psalm 100)*

Hymn: 'Guide me O thou great Jehovah/redeemer' (R+S 345, STF 465,
SOF 148)

<https://youtu.be/ietK7-57iFY>

1. Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore;
feed me now and evermore.

2. Open thou the crystal fountain
whence the healing stream shall flow;
let the fiery, cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:

strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield;
be thou still my strength and shield.

3. When I tread the verge of Jordan
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee;
I will ever give to thee.

Words: William Williams (1717-1791)

Prayer

God of dark and light, we praise you
for in the Spirit of Christ
you are with us, your presence surrounds us

In the warm dark, in the silence of solitude,
in the stillness of night, even in the scent of fear,
you are with us, your presence surrounds us

In the clear light, in the sounds of laughter,
in the security of friends, even in the scorching heat
you are with us, your presence surrounds us

In this holy place, in the hymns of praise,
in the hush of expectation, in the host of saints,
you are with us, your presence surrounds us

God of dark and light, in you is welcome,
in you is forgiveness, in you is new life,
you are with us, your presence surrounds us. Amen

Psalm 23: 'Brother James' Air' (*the tune is not in our usual books*)

The words are the traditional version of Psalm 23, but sung to a tune by Brother James (James Leith Macbeth Bain (1840-1925)) a healer, mystic and poet.

<https://youtu.be/maoixxdfpg>

1. The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want; he makes me down to lie
in pastures green; he leadeth me the quiet waters by. (x2)

2. My soul he doth restore again, and me to walk doth make
within the paths of righteousness, e'en for his own name's sake. (x2)

3. Yea, though I walk through death's dark vale, yet will I fear no ill;
for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me comfort still. (x2)

4. My table thou hast furnished in presence of my foes;
my head thou dost with oil anoint, and my cup overflows. (x2)

5. Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me,
and in God's house for evermore my dwelling-place shall be. (x2)

Words: Scottish Psalter, metrical psalm, 1650

Prayer for Understanding

Lord God we thank you for the riches of our treasury of Scripture. Help us to discover in these written words, your living Word which speaks to us today. Amen.

Bible Reading: Jeremiah 23:1-6 (ESV)

23 "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" declares the Lord. ² Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: "You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the Lord. ³ Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will set

shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the Lord.

⁵ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness.’

Bible Reading: Mark 6:30-34 and 53-56 (ESV)

³⁰ The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹ And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³² And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. ³³ Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴ When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things.

⁵³ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore. ⁵⁴ And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him ⁵⁵ and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶ And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

Sermon: Jesus the Shepherd who cares

The earliest known picture any Christian ever drew of Jesus is on the walls of a catacomb in Rome, and it is a picture of a Roman young man who is a shepherd, with a sheep on his shoulders. So it isn't a likeness of Jesus at all, it is a symbolic representation of Jesus, using what most Christians would probably agree is their favourite idea about Jesus. What is Jesus like? Jesus is like a good shepherd who cares for his sheep.

In our reading from the prophet Jeremiah, the leaders of the people are compared to bad shepherds who are responsible for the destruction and the scattering of the sheep/people. Now, they haven't actually done it themselves. The destruction and the scattering has been done by enemy nations and invading armies. But Jeremiah accuses the leaders of bad decisions and actions leading to this destruction. In the previous chapter (22) Jeremiah accuses the leaders of selfish and greedy lifestyles; not showing concern for the poor people of the land, but instead building richly decorated palaces for themselves. Ancient shepherds were much more concerned with keeping the sheep safe than modern shepherds. The 'rod and staff', together with the slingshot, would be used against mountain lions, bears, wolves, and packs of wild dogs. Defending the flock against human thieves and rustlers was also important. If the shepherds had sheepdogs their role would be to fight and defend the flock if necessary, not to help herd the flock. (One imaginative reading of Psalm 23 suggests that there were two sheepdogs called Goodness and Mercy following the flock.) Good shepherds

lived a simple pastoral life with their sheep, they were intimately involved with their sheep, they took on the burden of responsibility for the needs and the fears of their sheep. To compare the leaders of a nation to shepherds reflects a concern for wise and brave defence, as well as a concern for pastoral wellbeing and access to fresh pastures and clean water.

So our reading concludes with Jeremiah prophesying that a righteous king would arise who would lead the people with wisdom in ways of justice. And so we turn to Jesus. In our reading from Mark's gospel it tells us that when Jesus saw the crowd following him: "he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd." (v. 34) Which is worse, to be without a shepherd (Num 27:17; 1 Kgs 22:17; Ezek 34:5), or to have bad shepherds (Jer 23:1)? It probably doesn't make much difference to the poor sheep. In John's gospel (John 10:1-18) one of Jesus' great 'I am' sayings is: 'I am the good shepherd' which he contrasts with thieves, strangers and uncaring hired workers. The crowds of people Jesus encountered were being led by a variety of different oppressive people: by evil King Herod; by religious extremists in the form of the Pharisees, by Roman military power and the burdensome tax farming system; by powerful land-owning absentee landlords; and by priests who only wanted to support the temple and the sacrificial system in Jerusalem. Very little of this 'leadership' showed much compassion or care for the ordinary people.

Jesus comes with compassion in his heart and with love in action. He brings a different kingdom of God, with a different leadership, into the lives of these hurting people. He offers wise teaching to confused minds, he offers healing to physical bodies, he offers comfort to the broken hearted, he restores right spirits within people, he turns lives around, he gives dignity to the downtrodden, he sets people free from sin and guilt, he offers hope and purpose. And he never did it alone, he called his disciples to follow him in active example. He commissioned them to actively assist Jesus and to imitate Jesus in the things they did too. To follow Jesus is to become like him, to discover how to be a good shepherd too.

Praying with the 23rd Psalm

Today I offer you some re-writes of the 23rd Psalm. As you read them they may give you a fresh insight into the meaning of the psalm. You could try your own re-write, could you write a version from the perspective of your own career or present situation? As you do so it may help you to appreciate what the Lord does for you, and where you most need the Lord's guidance and provision at this time.

23rd Psalm for Busy People

The Lord is my Pace-setter; I shall not rush. He makes me stop and rest for quiet intervals.

He provides me with images of stillness, that restore my serenity;

He leads me in ways of efficiency through calmness of mind, and His guidance is peace.

Even though I have a great many things to accomplish each day, I will not fret, for His presence is here.

His timelessness, His all importance, will keep me in balance.

He prepares refreshment and renewal in the midst of my activity by anointing my mind with His oils of tranquillity.

My cup of joyous energy overflows!
Surely harmony and effectiveness shall be the fruits of my hours,
For I shall walk in the peace of my Lord, and dwell in His house for ever.
By Toki Miyashiro - A Japanese Translation

The Lord is my Drover

The Lord is my drover, I travel well. On outback tracks He finds green feed. He guides me safely to cool waterholes; His understanding revives my dusty life. He remembers the best stock routes, For which His name is well known. In deep gullies, shadowed by death, I am not frightened. You, my Lord, are with me, Your camp fires comfort me. You make sure there is food for me, Even in the times of drought. You provide midday shade for my head, Your water tanks overflow. Care and kindness ride beside me every day of my journey, And I will rest in the pound of my Lord forever.
By Bruce Prewer in "More Australian Psalms"

The Lord is my Programmer

The Lord is my programmer, I shall not crash.
He installed his software on the hard disk of my heart;
all of his commands are user-friendly.
His directory guides me to the right choices
for his name's sake.
Even though I scroll through the problems of life,
I will fear no bugs, for he is my backup.
His password protects me.
He prepares a menu before me
in the presence of my enemies, the hackers.
His help is only a keystroke away.
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me
all the days of my life,
and my file will be merged with his and saved forever.

The Lord is my Architect

The Lord is my architect,
I shall not be misproportioned.
He makes me enclose beautiful spaces,
he builds me erect in tranquility,
He restores my deteriorated parts.
He puts me together to reflect righteousness for his namesake.
Though I am overshadowed by skyscrapers and cathedrals,
I will fear no evil, for you stay attentive to me;
your pencil and creativity, they comfort me.

You prepare awards and admirations before me in the presence of my critics.
You cut the red ribbon at my entrance; my occupants are overcome with awe.
Surely goodness and love will shine in my windows all the days that I stand,
and I will stand in the city of the Lord forever.

The Journey of Recovery in Psalm 23 (For People in 12 Step Groups)

The Lord alone is the Shepherd I need
For without him I can't manage my life.
In his greener pasture my soul does feed;
In him I trust and lay down without strife.

I drink from the still waters of his love
Then I look close to see me as he can.
When I fall I call for help from above
And he restores me to my feet again.

He guides me to the path that's right for me;
To all the other paths I must say "no."
Though the path goes through a long dark valley
I won't fear since he's there to help me grow.

With his rod he disciplines me wisely
And helps me set boundaries that protect.
With his staff he always guides me safely
And inspects me when I pass under it.

He leads me up to a mountain plateau
There are enemies there I must forgive.
His oil heals and anoints so I can go;
His cup for me over-flows so I can give.

My steps back home I know I can retrace
Because he follows and has made me new.
In life's journey I look to Shepherd's face
And he guides me to home all the way through.
'A Walk with your Shepherd' by William Gaultiere, 1992

The Lord's Prayer

We each pray using our favourite set of memorised words ...

Communion Song: 'I come with joy' (STF 588, R+S 447)

<https://youtu.be/zRL fi52iQU>

1. I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved, and free,

the life of Jesus to recall,
in love laid down for me.

2. I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread.

3. As Christ breaks bread, and bids us
share,
each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends.

4. The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here.

5. Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one.

Words: Brian Wren (b. 1936)
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Communion

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We offer you thanks, Creator, Saviour, Giver of Life.
From the beginning you have made yourself known:
the heavens proclaim your glory and the earth sings your praise.
In wisdom you made all that is
and you bless us with earth's fruitfulness.
You are merciful and gracious, and abounding in love.
Yet from our first days we have disobeyed your will.
Long ago you called to yourself a people
to shine as light to guide all nations to your presence.
You led them to freedom;
you revealed to them your Law
and taught them through your prophets.
Finally you sent your promised Son, Jesus Christ,
who shared our human nature and understood our weakness.
Born of Mary, he showed forth your love by word and sign.
He sought the unloved and the lost
and welcomed all who came to him;
he taught us lessons of forgiveness
he brought us healing for our sickness,
and showed us how to live according to your will.
For this he was rejected,
for this he endured grief and sorrow,
for this he gave himself up to death upon the Cross.
But you broke the power of sin and death
and raised him to the heights,
that through the blood of his Cross
and by the gift of the Holy Spirit
everything in earth and heaven might be reconciled to you.

[The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed
took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said:
'This is my body which is broken for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.'
In the same way he took the cup also after supper, saying:
'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'
For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,
you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.]

Come, Creator God: renew the face of the earth;
come, eternal Saviour: remake us in your likeness;
come, Holy Spirit, transform these gifts:
that Christ may be known to us in the breaking of the bread
and that we may be strengthened to serve him in the world.
May we on earth be one with all Christ's people,
and, when all things are complete,
be raised up to be with him,
and with all your faithful servants in the heavenly places,
the homeland which we seek by faith,
and where he reigns in glory,
with you, Father, and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever.
Amen.

We take and share Bread and Wine

Prayer after Communion

God of a love stronger than death,
you have given us new birth into a living hope
through the gift of your Son.
God with us, you have fed us
and strengthened us for journeying ahead.
God of truth and power,
you take our weakness and our sin
and refashion us by grace.
Gracious God,
may the love which bids us welcome at this table
gather all your children into one,
in your eternal presence,
whole and free at last. Amen

Our Offerings

All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, for all His love.

Song: 'The Lord's my shepherd' (STF 481, SOF 2/1030)

<https://youtu.be/-eIQQayhpak>

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.

(your goodness will lead me home.)

Chorus

*And I will trust in you alone,
(I will trust, I will trust in you,)
and I will trust in you alone,
(I will trust, I will trust in you,)
for your endless mercy follows me,
(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.

Words: Stuart Townend

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Dismissal and Blessing

Now may the Lord God shepherd you with His Word and Spirit,
and gather you at the last into His fold.

And the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with you and those dear to you,
this day and every day. Amen.

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