



**Easter 4**

**3 May 2020**

## **Holy Communion**

**Our Community remembers Erica Campbell's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

### **Call to Worship**

When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.

A voice speaks at the door of our hearts and minds Let us be open once again to our sense of community even though we are apart.

**Come into our gathering in spirit once again, Lord Jesus Christ, for we hear your voice of love and concern offering nothing less than the grandeur of your incomparable grace and the inspiration of the journey of risen life.**

*I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved I came that [you] may have life and have it abundantly.] I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*

*John 10:9-11*

**Come, Holy Spirit, come**

### **Hymn 145**

*The king of love my shepherd is  
whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am his  
and he is mine forever.*

*Where streams of living water flow  
my ransomed soul he leadeth,  
and where the verdant pastures grow  
with food celestial feedeth.*

*Thou spread'st a table in my sight;  
thy unction grace bestoweth;  
and O what transport of delight  
from thy pure chalice floweth!*

**Good Shepherd, we acknowledge moments in our journeying when we do not wait to hear your voice. The false shepherds, who climb over the walls that would protect us, seem attractive to us. They tell us what we would prefer to hear and do but point us towards a diminishment of life, not abundant life at all.**

**You, Lord Jesus Christ, stand at the gateways of our souls.**

**Remind us, then, of the breadth of your grace and love as we gather around your table with the bread and wine between us.**

**For, as always, we have thanksgiving to offer, bread and wine to share, and community to nurture, even in times such as these of physical separation and isolation.**

**We see ahead of us a straight road beckoning us into abundant life in the presence of our Lord, Jesus the Christ, who walks both with us and ahead of us in faithfulness.**

**We give you thanks, O God, for the vision of splendour, hope and joy beyond the trials and tribulations of our challenging present.**

**Hymn 468**

*We are your people:  
Spirit of grace, you dare to make us  
to all our neighbours,  
Christ's living voice  
hands and face.*

*Glad of tradition,  
help us to see  
in all life's changing,  
where you are leading,  
where our best efforts should be.*

*Christ as we serve you  
in different ways,  
may all we're doing  
show that you're living,  
meeting your love with our praise*

**Acts 2:42-47**

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

**Gospel John 10:1-15**

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and 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. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

## Reflection

How do we know the voice of Christ in our time? Jesus is saying that the one who saves us is not the one who would sneak in and confront us and threaten us when we are at our most vulnerable. The voice of Christ is always to be recognized as the bringer of love and truth and grace so that people thankfully open the gates of their lives. Life is never diminished by the true shepherd of our souls. It is always made grander, freer and more confident – nothing short of abundant. So it is good to pause and ask ourselves whether that is the way we really experience our God. Would the world around us describe the church as the institution which adds to life, which brings abundance as it relates to people and to the institutions and systems of its day, of our day? And what is abundance anyway. Surely it is where we plumb the depths and heights and breadths of life rather than the triviality and transitory world of “mere” happiness. When we share the bread and the wine at the Lord’s Table we identify with his life and death in the fullest possible way – and then go out into the world to live life to the full, accepting all its challenges and opportunities without reservation even if at this time it is a world of quarantine and isolation for the immediate moment.

**Hymn 239**      *Jesus the Lord said, ‘I am the bread, the bread of life for the world am I,  
the bread of life for the world am I, the bread of life for the world am I,  
Jesus the Lord said, ‘I am the bread, the bread of life for the world am I’.*

*Jesus the Lord said, ‘I am the door, the way and the door for the poor am I,  
the way and the door for the poor am I, the way and the door for the poor am I,  
Jesus the Lord said, ‘I am the door, the way and the door for the poor am I’*

*Jesus the Lord said, I am the light, the one true light of the world am I, the one  
true light of the world am I, the one true light of the world am I,  
Jesus the Lord said, I am the light, the one true light of the world am I’.*

*Jesus the Lord said ‘I am the shepherd, the one good shepherd of the sheep am I,  
the one good shepherd of the sheep am I, the one good shepherd of the sheep am I  
Jesus the Lord said ‘I am the shepherd, the one good shepherd of the sheep am I’*

*Jesus the Lord said ‘I am the life, the resurrection and the life am I,  
the resurrection and the life am I, the resurrection and the life am I,  
Jesus the Lord said ‘I am the life, the resurrection and the life am I’.*

## Prayers for Ourselves and Others

Lord Jesus, Our great shepherd, the voice of grace and encouragement, standing with us and encircling the world with your compassion and care, enable us to open our minds and hearts so that we see others through your eyes.

**May our voices be trustworthy and our lives be vehicles for transforming love and justice. Make your love be wider and deeper within us that the world may be lifted to new heights of hope.**

**May we, your church, be known by the world as the place where people are met by the Good Shepherd and where the inspiration of your Holy Spirit is never confined to narrow dogmas of belief.**

Call us out of complacency and old assumptions into fresh visions for community around us and beyond us.

May our life together be an expression of songs which speak of surprising dreams for a new future as resurrection is realised because you are with us as we go. And so we pray as our Lord taught us;

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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

## Hymn 240

*All go to God when they are sorely placed:  
body and spirit feeds us with his bread.  
For everyone, he as a man hangs dead:  
forgiven life he gives all through his death.*

*We go to God when he is sorely placed,  
find him poor, scorned, unsheltered, without bread,  
whelmed under weight of evil. Weak or dead.  
We stand by God then , in his hour of grief.*

*God comes to us when we are sorely placed,  
body and spirit feeds us with his bread.  
For everyone, he as a man hangs dead:  
forgiven life he gives all through his death*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

## **We listen for Christ's voice to us now.**

May the earth resound with the sounds of love  
and Christ's church bear witness to abundant life for all.  
And may God go with us in every moment of our living,  
Shepherd, Creator, Spirit.

**Amen**

**Rev Graeme Kerr**