

HOLY TRINITY CUCKFIELD

Joyfully serving Jesus



Weekly devotions, prayers and news
Fourth Sunday of Easter
25 April 2021

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God!

1 John 3: 1

Dear friends,

This Sunday is often known as Good Shepherd Sunday. This might sound warm and fluffy, but here is a shepherd who lays down his very life for the sheep to draw them to the knowledge of the unity of God's love he desires us to know within our lives. When we find ourselves in the howling deserts of conflict, division or turmoil within our lives, the Good Shepherd desires to lead us beside the still waters of comfort; to restore our souls.

Jesus says, 'I am the good shepherd.' In the knowledge of this constancy, we too are tasked with bringing the knowledge of his abiding presence into other people's lives. What a privilege!

With blessings,
Michael (Vicar)

Please check the church website for more details

www.holytrinitycuckfield.org

Fourth Sunday of Easter (25 April 2021)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)*

Reader: Roger Edmonston

9.45 The Parish Eucharist *(in church and online - see website to book)*

Readers: Liz & Peter Graydon; Intercessor: Mark Parker

Services during the week:

Wednesday: 10.30 Holy Communion (C. Worship) *Readings: Acts 12: 24-13: 5; John 12: 44-end*

Thursday: 9.00am Holy Communion (Iona/Celtic) *Catherine of Siena:*

Readings: Proverbs 8: 1, 6-11; 3 John: 2-8; John 17: 12-26

Friday: 11.00am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) *Readings: Third Sunday of Easter*

Next Sunday: Fifth Sunday of Easter (2 May 2021)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)*

9.45 Parish Eucharist *(in church and online - see website to book)*

All services live on Zoom (other than the 8.00): Click the blue link on the front page of the church website before services, entering a waiting 'area' before joining everyone.

The Collect for Fourth Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ,
faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep:
teach us to hear your voice
and to follow your command,
that all your people may be gathered into one
flock, to the glory of God the Father.
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

The Post Communion Prayer:

Merciful Father,
you gave your Son Jesus Christ
to be the good shepherd,
and in his love for us
to lay down his life and rise again:
keep us always under his protection,
and give us grace
to follow in his steps;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Acts 4: 5-12

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, 'By what power or by what name did you do this?' Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is "the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone."

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.'

1 John 3: 16-end

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

John 10: 11-18

'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care 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. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.'

A thought

John the Gospel writer has revealed Jesus as the one who brings the breaking of the wonder of God's Love into everyday life; the changing of water into wine, the drawing into the knowledge of God's love those beyond the pale: the Samaritan woman at the well, the paralyzed man at the pool of Siloam, the woman caught in the act of adultery: the damaged, the weary. The fullness of life is being offered to all by the Good Shepherd. Our call is to be open to the call of the Shepherd, to allow ourselves to heed the pull of God's love within our lives - giving space to the Shepherd's voice in our liturgies, our prayers, our silences, and our interactions with the world. This in turn leads us on a journey. Jesus challenges us to approach every day as an opportunity to draw others to the fullness of life he offers in his resurrection life; lifting up the lowly, challenging the rich and powerful, seeking the lost, and even turning the other cheek; but above all to do so with the same reckless love he shows for us. He calls us as Shepherd to remember the words from Isaiah he himself interpreted in his home synagogue and which find their fulfilment not just in him but also in those who seek to follow him:

*'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free.'*

Never has our society needed the Christian message and vision as it does now. The helplessness so many feel within their lives, the abandonment of many areas of responsibility on so many fronts by so many bodies and institutions; the huge number of men, women and children in need of the work of the Spirit within their lives: those caught in all sorts of addiction, people dealing with mental illness or the breakdown of relationships. Forget hierarchies in Church or State; you and I - members of the Body of Christ - we each have a shared vocation and responsibility to draw people to the greatest message of hope for humanity - Jesus Christ - the good shepherd.

A prayer for this time of anxiety:

God of all compassion, your love never fails. Help us to listen to the tranquillity of your presence within our lives, so that we may grow in the knowledge that your Son, Jesus Christ, walks beside us, and your Holy Spirit comforts us at the heart of our being; for you are One God, world without end. Amen

Please remember those for whom we pray:

Immediate need: Barbara Booth, Wendy Boys, Carla Spear, Wendy Hibling, Justine, Sheila Mitchell, Graham Hibbert, Joe Eaton, Anne Greenhill, John Bernardi (priest), Kate Malby, Ros Thunder, Shirley Lewis

Long Term Need: Young Georgia, Young Joshua, Young Reggie, Ros Ayling, Wendy, Ann Went, Dave Cox, Jenny, Julie Sadler, Becky Parker, Mark Parker, Tony Burbidge, Christopher, Jenny, Marjorie Chilton, Janet Card, Yvonne Godsmark, George Snashall, Eileen Knight, Mary Todd, Gracie & Lucy Neiff, **Those in Care Homes:** Anne Norris, Alan Prebble, Stephanie Gilpin, Jill Rockey, Jean Simmons, Mary Watts, Diana Hoile, Ruth Baker

Please remember the recently departed and their families: HRH Prince Philip, Catherine Dunnage

In our Book of Remembrance this week we remember: 25th Mark Walklin, Leslie Holt, John Humphrey, 26th Charles & Oliver Woodcock, Dr. Timothy Carter, Christine Hawkes, Maxine Lower, 27th Violet Wachett, Edith Packham, Michael Gerrish, 28th Barbara Cheal, Trevor Penfold, Edith Gathercole, Olive Lyall, Jean Smith, 29th Raymond Hookham, Patrick Toseland, Jonathan Cavender, 1st Isabel Durham, William Llewellyn