

Dear all,

Tomorrow, the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, is traditionally Good Shepherd Sunday. Although we are not using the gospel reading that includes that quote, nevertheless, the gospel reading mentions Jesus as the shepherd who will lose none of his sheep. This is a reading of great comfort, especially as, anyone who knows sheep, or who has driven along a rural road in Wales will know, sheep are STUPID!

One of my favourite YouTube videos is this one, which illustrates so clearly how daft sheep are. [Sheep gets stuck in trench/ditch, jumps \(with Audio\) - YouTube](#) It could be a great parable of what it is like to be human. I can picture Jesus, perhaps with a wry smile on his face, holding back the “not again”, and bending down to get us out of our latest mess.

Handel, in Messiah, has a wonderful word-painting in his chorus ‘All we like sheep’. The tune for the words “have gone astray” wanders all over the place. [All We Like Sheep \(Messiah\) | National Youth Choir - YouTube](#). The piece ends with a sudden change of mood, as Handel reminds us what the cost was to our being rescued from our ‘stray-ness’.

Good Shepherd Sunday is also a Vocation Sunday. The gospel reading for today includes the verse *My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me* (John 10:27). ‘Vocation’ comes from the Latin ‘to call’ (from which we also get the words voice and vocal). It is tempting to see the idea of a calling relating to the ‘higher’ roles e.g. priesthood, teaching, nursing etc. But our calling as Christians is to be faithful in wherever God calls us – to be a faithful parent, friend, shopworker, volunteer... And in the church, there are a wide range of callings – intercessors, readers, flower arrangers, bell ringers, gardeners, encouragers...

What is your vocation? And how can you develop it?

The lectionary readings for tomorrow are: Genesis 7: 1-5, 11-18; 8: 6-18; 9: 8-13; Acts 9:36-end; and John 10: 22-30. The Psalm is Psalm 23.

The hymns for the service are [Jesus, Where'er Thy People Meet \(Tune: Wareham - 5vv\) \[with lyrics for congregations\] - YouTube](#), [Thine Forever God of Love Hymn Lyrics - YouTube](#), and [The King of Love My Shepherd Is \(Tune: Dominus Regit Me - 6vv\) \[with lyrics for congregations\] - YouTube](#)

Anglican Chant [Psalm XXIII. The Lord Is My Shepherd - YouTube](#)

Stuart Townend’s version [Psalm 23 \(Live from the Sing! Conference\) - Stuart Townend - YouTube](#)

And a contemporary/traditional Hebrew version [MIQEDEM - Psalm 23 \(Live in Studio\) תהילים כ"ג - YouTube](#)

(This appeared as a link from the previous link – it is last week’s Psalm, Psalm 150 - [MIQEDEM & friends across the globe - Psalm 150 \(from home\) - YouTube](#) Praise him with clashing cymbals, with stringed instruments and flutes!)

Anthems suggested for the lectionary readings include:

[The Lord is My Shepherd \(Psalm 23\) \[Goodall\] — Choir of Wells Cathedral - YouTube](#)

[Schubert - The Lord is my Shepherd - YouTube](#)

[William Mathias: Make a joyful noise \(Jubilate Deo\), op. 26/2 | Choir of Somerville College, Oxford - YouTube](#)

[Thomas Tomkins - My shepherd is the living Lord. Worcester Cathedral choir - YouTube](#)

[Surrexit Pastor Bonus - Orlando di Lasso; Performed by The Wartburg Choir, Lee Nelson, conductor - YouTube](#)

[Handel: 'Worthy Is The Lamb That Was Slain' from Messiah | AAM, VOCES8, Apollo5, Barnaby Smith - YouTube](#)



Stay safe.

Blessings and love

Mark