

The Stratfield Mortimer Benefice of

St Saviour
Mortimer West End

St Mary and St John
Stratfield Mortimer

St John the Baptist
Padworth

St Mary's Church of England School

St John's Church of England School

Diocese of Oxford



The Good Shepherd

The Parish Eucharist for The Fourth Sunday of Eastertide

21st April 2024 at 10.00 a.m. at St John's church, Mortimer

Online at Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6931233940>

There is, of course, no physical description of Jesus in the NT and we do not know what Jesus looked like. Perhaps this is not surprising given that time around the first century when, in a religious culture wary of 'graven images,' depictions of ordinary Jewish people were scarce. Perhaps interestingly, when some pilgrims from our parishes visited the Roman Catacomb of Callixtus the guide pointed out a wall painting of Jesus dating from the early third century, which is reputed to be one of the earliest existing images of him and which depicts him as 'The Good Shepherd.' I'll put a copy of it in the order of service.

Now, whilst we may not know what Jesus looked like it's clear from this Sunday's Gospel story that he was ready to describe himself and his mission and ministry in terms of a peasant shepherd. And in first century Palestine a shepherd had a hard life. Romanticised depictions of first century shepherding are a far cry from what was a life lived on the edge of society. Shepherds lived and slept with their animals and were derided as unclean physically and spiritually because they had no time for social and religious observances. I suppose you had to be a certain type of person to be a shepherd. Certainly, they had to be ready to put themselves in harm's way to protect their flock. Of course, we can all see that Jesus used this image because the shepherd was the very opposite of the norm of a 'respectable' authority figure. His criticism of the remote and self-serving leaders of the day was clear. They had proved themselves interested primarily in their own advantage. They had not taken proper care of the flock. They had not strengthened the weak, not bound up the injured, not healed the sick, not searched for the lost and not brought back the strays. And they had governed harshly. These may not have been the 'issues' which Jesus' hearers considered to be religious priorities, but, of course, that's Jesus' point. Jesus was saying that the people, all the people, deserved better. And the leaders had had their chance and now their time was up and now there would be a good shepherd with a new way who would reveal the implications of the grace and truth of God... for everyone. Jesus' point was, of course, that there would be a new way of doing things and a new sense of the requirements of peace and justice.

Jesus' hearers would have understood his message as they would have known that being a good shepherd could never have been a 'career' move for the ambitious and it certainly was not a way of life for the fainthearted. It entailed sacrifice and meant being ready to risk one's life for the well-being of the flock. Of course, Jesus knew at that time that he would soon be faced with his own sacrifice for the good of all.

When Jesus identifies with the good shepherd he is assuring his hearers that he will be with them when things get tough. After all, that's what good shepherds do. Perhaps that's why in difficult times people turn to Psalm 23: *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, he maketh me to lie down in green pasture, he leadeth me beside still water, he restoreth my soul. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear nor evil for thou art with me, thy rod and thy (protecting) staff they comfort me.*

In Jesus' day the good shepherd would be the one who would lead his flock onwards through the difficult patches and would call upon them to follow trustingly. At night times they might gather and there might be several flocks penned up in one fold. Yet, the morning would come and the good shepherd would once again call to his sheep, and they would recognise his voice and they would, again, follow him. Of course, the simple message is that if we listen to his voice we will not so much as find a theory or a religious idea, or even a creed, but we will find him and his way. And, as the message is that the good shepherd cares for each and every one of us, so, perhaps this Good Shepherd Sunday might seem like a good time to think again about our 'calling,' our 'vocation,' and the next part of the way.

We can only guess what Jesus' face might look like, but we can see his character and discern through his words his voice of grace and truth. And may God grant us grace to trust in the Good Shepherd and to know that he is with us, even in the valley of the shadow of death.

God bless, Paul

THE PARISH EUCHARIST FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



'The Good Shepherd'
The Catacomb of Callixtus

A warm welcome to the Parish's Sunday Eucharist in Eastertide.

An induction loop is provided. To use, please turn your hearing aid to T.

Gluten free wafers are available for those who need them. Please inform one of the vergers who will pass the information on to the clergy.

Online: *If you are not able to come to St John's you are warmly invited to share in the Parish's Christmas Day Eucharist online. And may God bless and renew us as we join together to worship. Thank you.*

THIS 'HOLY MEMORIAL' is known by various names: 1) **'The Eucharist'** - which means 'Thanksgiving' - because Jesus offered himself in love; 2) **'The Lord's Supper'** - or 'Breaking of the Bread' - because we celebrate it as a shared meal; 3) **'Holy Communion,'** - because we become one with Christ by receiving him; and 4) **'Holy Mass'** - holy sending - because it gives us a mission: to go in peace to serve the Lord.

The 'objectives' of the Eucharist: *The community gathers for the public celebration of the Eucharist in order to worship God; ask his forgiveness for sins; thank him for blessings received; listen to his voice in the Scriptures; present the needs of the world and our own needs too; offer our lives to him and his loving service; gain spiritual nourishment and recharge our weakened spiritual batteries by sharing life with him in Holy Communion. The simple structure of the Eucharistic celebration is organized around achieving these goals.*

THE GATHERING HYMN

**The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his,
and he is mine for ever.**

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

**And so through all the length of days
thy goodness faileth never:
good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house for ever.**

THE GATHERING

Priest **+** In the name of God - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

THE GREETING - Words of Welcome and Introduction.

The greeting proclaims the presence of the Lord with us.

The Penitential Rite, the Gloria and the Opening Prayer follow. The purpose of these preliminary rites is to help the people, gathered for the celebration of the Eucharist, to join with each other as a worshipping community, and to prepare to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist - the Great Thanksgiving.

Priest **The Lord be with you.**

All **And also with you.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

The priest may introduce the Eucharist.

THE PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

The Invitation to Confession - we call to mind our sins that we may repent of them / turn from them and ask forgiveness of God and each other.

Priest My brothers and sisters, as we come together as God's family
 to celebrate the Easter mysteries,
 let us ask with confidence our heavenly Father's forgiveness for our sins,
 for he is gentle and compassionate.

A pause for quiet reflection follows.

 Lord Jesus, you raise us to new life.
 Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

 Lord Jesus, you forgive our sins.
 Christ, have mercy.
All **Christ, have mercy.**

 Lord Jesus, you feed us with living bread.
 Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

The Absolution

 + Almighty God, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
All **Amen.**

THE GLORIA

Cantor Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo.
All Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo.

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

THE COLLECT

Priest Let us pray that the risen Christ will raise us up and renew our lives and our world.

Together we spend a few moments in silence, realising, and giving thanks, that we are in the presence of God our Father to whom we make our prayers. The prayer 'collects' our thoughts.

 Risen Christ,
 faithful Good Shepherd of your Father's sheep:
 teach us to hear your voice
 and to follow in your way,
 that all your people may be gathered into one flock,
 to the glory of God the Father.
All **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Liturgy of the Word consists of readings from the scriptures; a sermon/homily, which expounds the readings; the Profession of Faith, which is the Creed of God's people; and the Prayer of the Faithful or General Intercessions in which the people of God intercede for all humankind and all creation.

In the Liturgy of the Word God speaks to us of redemption and salvation and nourishes us with his 'word.' We are not only listening to past history. The God who speaks to Israel and to the early Church speaks to us today through the power of the Holy Spirit working within us as we listen to him and as he reveals the pattern for our lives. 'The word of God is something alive and active: it cuts like any double edged sword but more finely...it can judge the secret emotions and thoughts'(The Letter to the Hebrews 4:12).

THE FIRST READING – THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 4: 8 - 12. To be read by Roger Jones.

Reader A reading from The Acts of the Apostles.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter said: 'Rulers of the people and elders! If you are questioning us today about an act of kindness to an invalid, and asking us how he was healed, then I am glad to tell you all, and would be glad to tell the whole people of Israel, that it was by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the one you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by this name and by no other that this man is able to stand up perfectly healthy, here in your presence, today. This is the stone rejected by you the builders, but which has proved to be the keystone. For all the names in the world given to men, this is the only one by which we can be saved.'

At the end of the reading:

Reader This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Now we prepare to hear the Gospel (the Good News) and acknowledge that we are his people and called to be part of his mission to the world inasmuch as we share his message and his life with faith, hope and love.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Cantor Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

All **Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

Call us good shepherd we listen to you,
wanting to see you in all that we do,
we would the gate of salvation pass through.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

THE GOSPEL READING – ST JOHN'S GOSPEL 10: 11 - 18.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you .**

Let us hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St John.

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said: 'I am the good shepherd:
the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep.
The hired man, since he is not the shepherd
and the sheep do not belong to him,
abandons the sheep and runs away
as soon as he sees a wolf coming,
and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep;
this is because he is only a hired man
and has no concern 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 my sheep.
And there are other sheep I have
that are not of this fold,
and these I have to lead as well.

They too will listen to my voice,
and there will be only one flock,
and one shepherd.
The Father loves me,
because I lay down my life
in order to take it up again.
No one takes it from me;
I lay it down of my own free will,
and as it is in my power to lay it down,
so it is in my power to take it up again;
and this is the command I have been given by my Father.'

At the end of the Gospel:

All This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

All Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

THE SERMON

We are a Eucharistic community - united around word and sacrament. Through the readings God has spoken to his people of his redeeming love and of the nourishment which his Spirit gives. The sermon reflects on our readings and relates them to our Eucharistic celebration and to our ordinary daily life.

After the sermon there may be a short period of silent reflection.

THE PROFESSION OF CHRISTIAN FAITH - THE CREED

We make the profession of faith in response to the word of God written in the Gospels and spoken in the sermon. We testify that God is our Father who gives us new life through his Son and who calls us together in the power of his Spirit to be a Eucharistic people, a 'thanksgiving people', a living community of his abiding self-giving love.

All **We believe and trust in God the Father who made the world.**
We believe and trust in his Son, Jesus Christ, who redeemed the world.
We believe and trust in the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God. Amen

THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL OR GENERAL INTERCESSION

We are invited to pray for all people and for all creation and for the needs of the Church's mission in bringing Christ's Gospel to the world. Through baptism we have been made one with Christ, our great high priest, and we share in his prayer before the Father for the needs of the Church's mission to the world. Our prayer flows from our listening to the Gospel and sermon by which we have been made more aware of our Christian commitment.

This Prayer of the Faithful, or General Intercession, is announced and consists of a series of intercessions; we pray for the universal Church and its mission and for our bishop and diocese and for our benefice - our parishes and our two Church schools; for the world, for this United Kingdom, for the King, for our District and Village Councils and local communities, for our families and friends; for the sick and suffering and for all in pain; and we remember those who have died. And in communion with Mary, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist and all the Saints of God we entrust one another and all people and all creation to God's saving love.

Priest: My brothers and sisters, let us pray to our heavenly Father, in union with risen Christ,
and in the strength of the Holy Spirit.

The deacon or minister continues:

Heavenly Father, shed the light of the risen Christ upon our world and give us grace to live to share the joy of the Easter Gospel.

Give grace to the Church that it may be faithful to Christ and his mission and witness to his goodness and love for all humankind; for Justin our Archbishop; for Steven our bishop; for Olivia our area bishop; for our benefice's parishes and schools of St Mary's and St John's.

All Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, bless the King and guide our Government, our District and Village Councils, and all in authority that they may govern with wisdom and courage, direct us in the ways of justice and peace, and that together we may seek the common good.

All Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, bless our families, our friends and our neighbours, all those you have given us to care for and all those who care for us. May this Eastertide be a springtime for our life together and may our love for one another bear witness to the love of the risen Christ.

Lord, in your mercy,

All Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, we pray to you for those who are suffering and in pain: for those who are persecuted; for refugees; for the poor; for those weighed down by hardship; for those burdened by feelings of failure and guilt; for those who despair; for the lonely; for the broken-hearted; for those who mourn. And of our own we pray for...

May the love of the risen Christ bring them comfort and the hope of the resurrection bring them peace.

Lord, in your mercy,

All Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, we remember before you all past parishioners, our loved ones gone before us, and those who have who have died recently...

May they know the joy and peace of the resurrection and may we be united for ever in heaven.

Lord, in your mercy,

All Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, in communion with Blessed Mary, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist and all the Saints, may we find strength in your grace, and light in your truth, to share our lives in the way of the risen Christ.

Priest Merciful Father,

All Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, Our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST



At the Last Supper Christ 'took some bread and when he had given thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying "This is my body which will be given for you; do this in remembrance of me". He did the same with the cup...' (Luke 22:19-20). The Church, joyfully obedient to the Lord's command, celebrates the Eucharist taking care that our 'liturgy' corresponds to the words and actions of Christ: 1) Taking bread and wine - we take our own gifts to the Altar, such as our time and talents and our money for the poor and for ministry. 2) Giving thanks (the meaning of the word Eucharist) - in the Eucharistic Prayer the priest, in the name of us all, says the great hymn of our thanksgiving to God for the whole work of salvation, in which the offerings become the Body and Blood of Christ. 3) The breaking of the one bread is a sign of the unity of the faithful - a sign of the unity which comes through sharing in Christ. 4) And in Holy Communion we receive Christ. In this way, Sunday by Sunday and day by day, the Church tries to carry out what the Lord asked his disciples to do in remembrance of him.

THE PEACE

We acknowledge and give thanks for our unity with one another in Jesus Christ our Lord, which his death and resurrection have brought to us. He is the peace between us. The sign of peace echoes Christ's own resurrection greeting to his disciples. Before we share in the same bread we express our love for one another in Christ and pray for peace and unity (cf Luke 1.78,79).

Priest The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples
and said, 'Peace be with you.'

Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All And also with you.

THE OFFERTORY HYMN

**A new commandment I give unto you:
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
By this shall all know that you are my disciples:
if you have love one for another.
By this shall all know that you are my disciples:
if you have love one for another.**

**A new commandment I give unto you:
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
You are my friends if you do what I command you.
Without my help you can do nothing.
You are my friends if you do what I command you.
Without my help you can do nothing.**

**A new commandment I give unto you:
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
I am the true vine, my Father is the gard'ner.
Abide in me: I will be with you.
I am the true vine, my Father is the gard'ner.
Abide in me: I will be with you.**

THE PRESENTATION AND PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

*The peoples' gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar. The offerings of money is made and promised to support the wider ministry and work of the Church.
Taking the Gifts: We give thanks to God for the gifts in the following words.*

BREAD

Priest Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.
All **Blessed be God for ever.**

WINE

All Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become for us the cup of salvation.
Blessed be God for ever.

OUR TIME, TALENTS AND TREASURE/MONEY

All Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have the gifts of our time, talents and money to offer. May our offerings of our gifts be a sincere sign of our gratitude and our dedication to your service.
Blessed be God for ever.

The priest prays quietly: Lord God, we ask you to receive us and be pleased with the sacrifice we offer you with humble, contrite and thankful hearts.

The priest washes hands as an act of cleanliness and as an expression of the desire for inward purification, praying quietly: Lord, wash away my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Priest Pray my brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father.
All **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.**
Priest Amen.
Priest Heavenly Father, restore us by these holy Easter mysteries. And may the continuing work of Christ our redeemer bring us eternal joy.
All **Amen.**

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Eucharistic Prayer is the centre and high point of the whole Christian celebration. This great prayer of praise and thanksgiving proclaims the wonderful works of God and through it we join ourselves with Christ in praise and thanksgiving to God the Father and in offering ourselves to him in union with Christ's self-offering on the cross. We express our share in the prayer, which is said on behalf of all the people, by listening inwardly and joining in the acclamations (joyful shouts or songs) and the Sanctus (the Holy, Holy, Holy which concludes the preface), the memorial acclamation and the great 'Amen' which concludes our Eucharistic Prayer.

Priest The Lord be with you.
All **And also with you.**

 Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

 Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

In the Preface we praise God for his mighty acts:

It is truly right and just, our duty, our joy and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

From sunrise to sunset this day is holy,
for Christ has risen from the tomb
and scattered the darkness of death
with light that will not fade.

Thus the risen Lord walks with your gathered people,
unfolds for us your word,
and makes himself known in the breaking of the bread.

And though the night will overtake this day
you summon us to live in endless light,
the never-ceasing Sabbath of the Lord.

And so, with choirs of angels and with all the heavenly host,
we proclaim your glory
and join their unending song of praise:

All **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We pray to the Father for the sending down of the Holy Spirit and recall the Lord's Supper.

Priest Lord God, you are the most holy one, enthroned in splendour and light,
yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ you reveal the power of your love
made perfect in our human weakness.

Embracing our humanity, Jesus showed us the way of salvation;
loving us to the end, he gave himself to death for us;
dying for his own, he set us free from the bonds of sin,
that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption,
Father, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your creation
be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the night he gave himself up for us all
he took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Therefore we proclaim the death that he suffered on the cross,
we celebrate his resurrection, his bursting forth from the tomb,
we rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high
and we long for his coming in glory.

Form us into the likeness of Christ
and make us a perfect offering in your sight.

Look with favour on your people
and in your mercy hear the cries of our hearts.

Bless the earth, heal the sick, let the oppressed go free
and fill your Church with power from on high.

Gather your people from the ends of the earth to feast
with the Mary, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist and all your Saints
at the table in your kingdom, where the new creation is brought to perfection
in Jesus Christ our Lord;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

The communion rite lays strong emphasis on peace, unity and our prayer for forgiveness. We come together to the Lord's table in accordance with the Lord's command, 'Take, eat... take, drink', as a community bound together by the love of God manifest in Christ. We can all be confident in Christ's mercy as we respond to his call to come to his table. Our communal recitation of the Lord's Prayer - the prayer he taught us - prepares us for Holy Communion with our Lord.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

We bless God and pray for our world, our communities and our lives to be shaped by God's will; we pray for daily needs to be met, for forgiveness for wrongdoings, strength to resist temptation and protection from danger.

Priest Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us.

All **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.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The priest takes the host and breaks it over the cup, praying quietly: 'May this mingling of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.' 'Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread' (1 Corinthians 10:17)

Christ's gesture of breaking bread with his disciples at the Last Supper gave the Eucharist the name of the 'breaking of bread.'. This gesture signifies that we who share one bread and one cup are made one. The breaking of the Eucharistic bread becomes a sign of unity and charity as the one bread is distributed to the family of God's people.

Priest We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All **Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.**

The priest prepares quietly for Holy Communion. We may all join quietly in this prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, by the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit your death brought life to the world. By your holy body and blood free me from all my sins and from every evil. Keep me faithful to your teaching, and never let me be parted from you. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Priest Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. *cf. John 1: 29*

Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

The sign of communion is more complete when given under both 'kinds' since then the 'sign' of the eucharistic meal appears more clearly. However, we live in exceptional times when, if you think right, communion may be received in one 'kind.'

The priest takes the host, raises it a little and shows it saying: The Body of Christ. And the same with the cup saying: The Blood of Christ. When receiving Holy Communion the response and assent to Christ is:

+ Amen.

DURING HOLY COMMUNION *the Choir may sing anthems, hymns and songs.*

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 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.**

PRAYER AFTER HOLY COMMUNION

Priest Let us pray.

The priest invites us all to pray that the Holy Eucharist will have its effect in transforming our lives and bring us all to God's kingdom. We pray together silently for a while before 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.

All **Amen.**

THE NOTICES FOR THE COMMUNITY ARE GIVEN.

THE CONCLUDING RITE

All Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Priest The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you.**

THE BLESSING

Priest God the Father, by whose love Christ was raised from the dead,
open to us the gates of everlasting life.

All Amen.

Priest God the Son, who in bursting the grave has won a glorious victory,
give us joy as we share the Easter faith.

All Amen.

Priest God the Holy Spirit, whom the risen Lord breathed into his disciples,
empower us and fill us with Christ's peace.

All Amen.

Priest + And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Let us go in the peace of Christ, Alleluia, Alleluia.

All Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia.

THE RECESSIONAL OR SENDING OUT HYMN

We have a gospel to proclaim,
good news for all throughout the earth;
the gospel of a Saviour's name:
we sing his glory, tell his worth.

Tell of that glorious Easter morn:
empty the tomb, for he was free.
He broke the power of death and hell
that we might share his victory.

Now we rejoice to name him King:
Jesus is Lord of all the earth.
This gospel-message we proclaim:
we sing his glory, tell his worth.

Please donate regularly to support the Church's mission and work. *The church here needs your help in order to serve our villages, our diocese, our nation and our world in the future. Our doors were closed due to Covid 19 and with no regular Government or Church of England funding the parish lost significant income. Please see the website to see how to give efficiently. Thank you.*

