



**Church at Home 8**  
**For Abridge**  
**Good Shepherd Sunday**  
**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020**



Although still in the Easter season today is traditionally called Good Shepherd Sunday as we begin to link what Jesus said before his death and resurrection to the situation afterwards.

Thank you for continuing to share your Church at Home. May the link feel real and supportive as we take part together.

*If you know of someone in the church family who is alone for this act of worship, you might like to give them a call and arrange to share this time with them.*

*The Church of England has also recently opened **a free phone line with hymns, short reflections and prayers** you might like to access: 0800 804 8044*

A glance at the TV programmes reveals how the schedule is being filled with slots about farming. Apart from Countryfile, the main news is beginning to feature farmers and their produce. Last weekend the plight of dairy farmers was highlighted with milk being thrown down the drain and businesses' very existence under real threat. However, some of the feel good and easy-to-film-in-lockdown programmes are on lambing. They are also very therapeutic during this virus dominated times.

Nearer to home, if you go on the [Lambourne End Centre website](#) and on to their Facebook section you can see short videos on the lambing happening on our doorstep.



**Approach and confession:**

Bless Your name, Lord Jesus. With open hearts, minds and spirits, we gather to praise You, grateful that Your arms are thrown so wide in welcome. It is in the security of that embrace that we confess we do not deserve such warmth or acceptance. We have let You down in so many ways. We have failed to reflect Your goodness in the words we have spoken. In the way we have treated others and in the selfish things we have done. We ask for Your forgiveness –but more than that. We ask for the courage to choose to do better. Help us to remember every minute of every day, that we are Yours, loved by You, called by You. Let that love and that calling make us generous towards others and more loving towards You. Be Lord of our lives, this day and forever. **Amen.**

**1. Our Collect or collected prayer for today is:-**

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. Amen.

**2. A Prayer:** *I pause to be still; to breath slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon God. Jesus, open my eyes to see that You are alive, present and powerful today. Holy Spirit, infuse in all I say and do with the hope of resurrection life.*

**3. Read the Bible passage from Acts 2: 42-47; pause for “prayer of understanding” and read again slowly.**

We see the new church in action coming together, caring, sharing, and growing in understanding in ways that we long to be able to do once again. May the lockdown rekindle our joy of being together and make us aware of its importance.

**4. Read the Bible passage from 1 Peter 2: 19-end, pause for “prayer of understanding” and read again slowly.**

The passage finishes with us as sheep, having lost our way, being gathered up by the good shepherd, uniting us in his healing and love. May we recognise our unity in the risen Lord

**5. Read the Bible passage from John’s Gospel 10:1-10, pause for “prayer of understanding” and read again slowly.**

A look at the videos from Lambourne reveals some ways the shepherd cares. He cannot give up because there is lockdown. He is not a hireling or a thief. He is on the watch at all times. As the birth draws close the observation gets more intense. He does not interfere if all is going well. If there are complications, he is there easing and comforting, sometimes seemingly adding to the pain, but knowing that it is necessary for the survival of mother and baby. When all is done there is much rejoicing. Turning mother and baby out through the doorway into first pasture, the shepherd is never far away. No wonder Jesus is seen as the Good Shepherd.

**To ponder;** In the Holy Land the shepherd mainly leads, and the sheep follow; In this country the sheep goes ahead shepherded on by the shepherd following. Is either picture more helpful?

**6.** To help you explore the story further, there is a **reflection sheet** and also some **all-age activities**, that you might like to use, if you have access to the Internet. You can find these resources on the websites of the two churches and here are the links:

[www.lambournechurch.com](http://www.lambournechurch.com)      [www.abridgeevangelicalchurch.org](http://www.abridgeevangelicalchurch.org)

**7.** For our prayers, and in the light of the resurrection of Christ, let us remember:

- The government and advisors as they plan the way ahead
- Every family and individual that we may bear with patience for the common good. May no individual or group get overlooked, now and in the long term.
- All key workers who continue to put themselves at risk to save lives. You may know of some by name for whom you can pray.
- Those who are being treated in hospital this very day, and all their loved ones, watching and waiting.

Add any particular people and situations that The Lord has brought to your mind as you have been praying. End with our family prayer, **The Lord’s Prayer**.

**8.** Hymns to have in mind: - [The Lord’s my shepherd](#). [Loving Shepherd](#)

End your time of church-at-home by saying out loud the words of **The Grace**, reaching out your hands to include in your imagination all those you know and love, who live here in the village.

Finally you are all invited to join Keith and Ruth White with the global Mill Grove family on line for their Our Day celebration on Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup> live at 2.00 pm. Details here: [www.millgrove.org.uk/our-day-2020](http://www.millgrove.org.uk/our-day-2020)

Church Leaders Contact details: - **Nick** - 01992 814 426. **Roger** - 01992 815 838. **Keith** - 020 8504 9186