

25th April 2021 - Easter 4

I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

On Tuesday, after a long, distressing trial in Minneapolis, Derek Chauvin was convicted of the murder of George Floyd. One of the police officers who testified against him said that officers were taught that the sanctity of life and protection of the public are the cornerstone of the department's policy. Clearly, what we saw on the video was not consistent with that, as a white officer had his knee on a black person's neck.

On Monday, the BBC Panorama programme, 'Is the Church Racist?', heard distressing testimony from clergy about racism nearer at home, as well some good news stories.

What do we discover when we look at ourselves? Do we view people as being of less worth because they have black skin, come from a different ethnic background, are gypsies, or have some other alternative lifestyle?

In today's Gospel Reading (*John 10:11-18*), Jesus says, 'I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know me... And I lay down my life for the sheep'.

Of course, all of us are God's 'own', regardless of our skin, sexuality, ethnic background and so on.

But it takes us a long time to learn that lesson – and even to realise that we, ourselves, are God's 'own' – known and loved by the Good Shepherd.

Blessings, Gary.

P.S., My quote of the week: 'Women who seek to be equal to men lack ambition' – Timothy Leary!

St Mary's
Fordingbridge
SP6 1BB

St Mary's
Breamore
SP6 2DF

Holy Ascension
Hyde
SP6 2QJ

St Giles
Godshill
SP6 2JJ

St Boniface
Woodgreen
SP6 2AJ

St Mary's
Hale
SP6 2RF

Sandleheath
Uniting Church
SP6 1PT

We welcome all, especially visitors and those attending for the first time. If you need gluten free wafers at Communion, please speak to someone at the door before the service.

Please take this newsletter home with you for the week ahead. God Bless

Readings for this week
25th April 2021
Easter 4

COLLECT:

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.

PSALM 23 *(For Morning Prayer)*

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
Therefore can I lack nothing.
2. He makes me lie down in green pastures
And leads me beside still waters.
3. He shall refresh my soul
And guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
4. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no
evil;
For you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
5. You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me;
You have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.
6. Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Acts 4:5-12

Peter and John are arrested after healing the lame man, and questioned about their authority.

⁵ The Jewish rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, ⁶ with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷ When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, ‘By what power or by what name did you do this?’ ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹ 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, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ This Jesus is “the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.” ¹² There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.’

At the end, the Reader says:

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL READING

Please stand and turn to face the Gospel Reader

When the Gospel is announced, the Reader says:

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *John*.

Glory to you, O Lord.

(Glory be to thee, O Lord.)

John 10:11-18

Jesus the Good Shepherd willing to lay down his life.

Jesus said to the Pharisees: ¹¹ 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² 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. ¹³ The hired hand runs away - because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸ 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.'

At the end, the Reader says:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

(At the end, the Reader says:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to thee, O Christ.)

(c) New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible.

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.

EMERGENCY PRAYER CHAIN

Please send all requests for prayer to prayer@avonvalleychurches.org.uk. If you feel able to commit to regular prayer for those on the list and wish to become a prayer partner, please make contact via the above e-mail address.

 **OUT & ABOUT: Sunday**, Gary is presiding and preaching at St Mark's, Highcliffe, this morning, for their Patronal Festival. **Monday**, Trustees' Meeting of 'Avon Valley Community Matters' in the morning, followed by a Wedding Seminar (on the new process for registering marriages), individual AVC and Deanery Meetings, and Fordingbridge Annual Parish Celebration in the evening. **Tuesday**, pastoral visits. **Wednesday**, pastoral visits during the day, and Hale and Woodgreen Annual Parish Celebration in the evening. **Thursday**, Staff Communion and Meeting in the morning, followed by other meetings, planning and catching up during the day, school assembly in the afternoon, and Breamore Annual Parish Celebration in the evening. **Friday**, preparation for the weekend, and other planning.

COFFEE AFTER CHURCH: We won't be able to offer coffee after Services in Church (although it might be possible in Step 3, May 17th, to do it outdoors). **On-Line Zoom Coffee** – we will be having Zoom Coffee at 11.15am on Sunday 2nd May (timed to give people time to go home and put the kettle on. Moving forwards we are planning to have Zoom Coffee on the 1st Sunday of the month (if there are enough people who would like to meet more regularly, and someone is happy to open the Zoom Meeting, that would be great). *Meeting ID 646 331 066 Password 123654.* Direct link will be in the Partner's email next week.

ACCESS TO ON-LINE WORSHIP : Our on-line services will continue to be available on our **telephone line**, 01425 543305, charged at your normal local rate. If you want to listen to live or recorded worship, it's usually easier to put your phone onto speakerphone, so you can sit back and enjoy.

ANNUAL PARISH CELEBRATIONS: We are again holding our Annual Parish Celebrations on-line this year (you can also attend by telephone). It is only a few months since we held last year's Meetings in October, so these will be fairly brief (but important) occasions – we'll elect Churchwardens, PCC Members, approve the accounts, and look back over the past 6 months.

The Meetings are all at 7.00p.m., on:

Fordingbridge – Monday, April 26th;

Hale & Woodgreen – Wednesday, April 28th;

Breamore – Thursday, April 29th.

The Zoom Details for **all** Meetings are: Meeting ID: 840 1296 7755; Passcode: 178999; Telephone 0131 460 1196 (you'll need the ID and Passcode) and the direct link will be in the Partners email.

PARISH GIVING SCHEME: The day-to-day finances of all of our four Parishes are dire at present! We will be in a seriously dangerous position by the end of this year if things do not improve – and the largest part by far of our expenditure is on people and buildings, neither of which we would want to do without. **ALL** the money which supports the fantastic work which our staff team and volunteers do has to be raised locally, and we are very grateful to all of those who already give so generously, regularly and in one-off gifts. **If you do not yet give regularly**, or are not already part of the Scheme, please consider giving through the **PARISH GIVING SCHEME**. It is by far the easiest way to make your regular donations to the work of our Churches and Parishes. You can set this up on-line (www.parishgiving.org.uk), by phone (0333 002 1271) or with a paper form (ask the Church Office). Full details on the **DONATE** page of our website. Thanks. Gary.

READY TO ORGANISE A FUNDRAISER? Have you got lots of Fundraising ideas but don't want to be the only one doing anything?! Avon Valley Community Matters is the charity that organised Easter in a Bag. It now needs help from willing volunteers to get together in small teams to raise much needed funds so that the good work of the charity can continue in the local community. Established events like Messy Church, Open the Book and Holiday at Home all need resources, as do future projects for young people and families. It would be great to have regular fundraising events, both big and small, throughout the year. If you, and maybe a friend or two, are willing to help in this way, or want to know more, please do get in touch. Contact Irene via the Church Office Tel: 01425 653163 or office@avonvalleychurches.org.uk

KINKIIZI LENT APPEAL : If you have been able to support this year's Deanery appeal please could you send your "40 for 40" donation **as soon as possible** via the Church Office (39 Salisbury Street, Fordingbridge, SP6 1AB) in cash, or cheque payable to Parish of Fordingbridge, clearly marked Kinkiizi; via the collection plate from 18th April or to Martin Calver direct.

HALE and WOODGREEN COMMUNITY COOKBOOK : The new cookbook is now available for you to buy. Ten years on from the first edition, this one contains over 80 new recipes, the majority of which have been sent in by people in and around our parish and has been put together during lockdown. To order please call Lynda Warne or 07799 542707 or email Lynda.warne@hotmail.co.uk

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR FARESHARE : The Fareshare Larder now comes to Fordingbridge every Friday between 1.30pm and 3pm. It is situated in the church hall car park opposite St Marys Church, Fordingbridge, SP6 1BB. As a volunteer you will be helping and supporting their existing staff which usually consists of two to three people, this will mainly involve helping with packing of food and greeting clients. Initially we are looking for one volunteer a week and then increase to two once it becomes more popular. I would be looking for volunteers to do one Friday every 4-6 weeks. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer please email Jackie Rowe at accounts@avonvalleychurches.org.uk.

BIN TWINNING : raises funds for Tearfund's global Environmental and Economic Sustainability programme, where local partner organisations in Haiti, Pakistan and Uganda are setting up projects to tackle critical waste management issues in these countries. We would love for Fordingbridge to become the first bin twinned town in the country. During the Saturday Conversation on 1st May at 10am Jo Heath will be talking to Lorraine Kingsley from Bin Twinning but in the meantime there is lots more

REFLECTION : Jesus told us that we should love the Lord our God wholeheartedly; also we should love our neighbour as ourselves. These two commandments are the core of Christian lifestyle. Let us reflect on the meaning of the second one. " Love your neighbour as yourself". So, by implication, we should both love our neighbour and love ourselves! Shown thus it raises the question of 'how well do we each care for ourselves?' God created us and we are challenged to each make the most of our own potential, but with all the stress of living, families, responsibilities, jobs - both employment & voluntary, and so on, do we sometimes neglect to take enough care of ourselves?

An impact of the pandemic and its lockdowns is that some people have a lower feeling of well-being, others feel a bit depressed or anxious; some are less emotionally resilient. People are naturally gregarious and find that some interaction is stimulating; we have missed that stimulation. So many people have been splendidly kind and taken on new roles and duties to help compensate for the restrictions and deprivations, but overall we each need a bit of tender loving care! So do please remember that great commandment 'love one another and also love yourself. Take care!

Jeremy Houghton-Brown

This Week - 25th April 2021 - Easter 4

Online/live streamed services via Facebook, Website or Faith Online and available afterwards on YouTube

Sunday 25 April	8.15am	Holy Communion	Breamore
	10.00am	Sung Communion	Fordingbridge
	10.00am	Holy Communion + streamed	Hyde
	10.00am	Holy Communion	Woodgreen
	6.00pm	Evensong + streamed	Fordingbridge
Mon to Fri	10.00am	Thought for the Day	
Mon 26	9.00am	Morning Prayer (Meeting ID: 157 284 292, Password: 764200)	On-line (Zoom)
Tue 27	2.00pm	<i>Burial of ashes - late Raymond Skerratt</i>	Hyde
Wed 28	9.00am	Morning Prayer (details as Monday)	On-line (Zoom)
	10.00am	Thought for Day & Communion	Fordingbridge
Sat 1 May	10.00am	The Saturday Conversation	On-line
Sunday 2 May	8.15am	Holy Communion + streamed	Fordingbridge
	10.00am	Morning Service	Breamore
	10.00am	Allsorts - AVC Youth, Children & Families celebration	Fordingbridge
	10.00am	Holy Communion	Hale
	10.00am	Holy Communion	Hyde
	11.30am	Baptism - Scarlett Bysouth	Fordingbridge
	12.30pm	Baptim - James & Harriet Gordon	Fordingbridge

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED TO VISITORS

Contact : Gail Newell or Jackie Rowe, Parish Administrators
Email : office@avonvalleychurches.org.uk or call 01425 653163
Website : www.AvonValleyChurches.org.uk