

Reflection on John 10: 11-18

Today's gospel gives us the opportunity to reflect on the metaphor of Jesus being a Good Shepherd, giving some insights into his – and God's – nature.

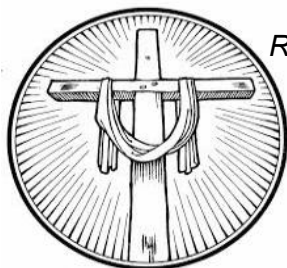
God loves us so much – enough to actually die for us, not because he 'should', but because God chooses to; it's in his nature.

Jesus says of his flock 'I know my own and my own know me'; God (through Jesus) is knowable. Not *comprehensible*, but *knowable*, just as we are known individually, warts and all, to God.

Jesus also says 'I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice'. God is fully inclusive. Throughout the gospels, Jesus shows particular love for the marginalised; those written of by society as unclean or unworthy. God longs to draw ALL to himself, irrespective. As humans, we may have certain reservations and prejudices – not so with God.

Within the flock then, there will be much variety and difference. We can see this in the variety of churches that exist. Jesus says, in verse 16 'So there will be one flock, one shepherd'. God longs for unity. Unity does not mean becoming bland clones of one another. There can be variety in unity, when the different parts respect and complement each other – and are willing to listen to learn from each other.

So as we strive to know and love God ever more deeply, may we continue to grow in love and unity with one another.



Revd Alison

Codes for the Zoom worship at 10.30

These are codes for Sundays from 11.04.21 until the end of June

Meeting ID: 843 1587 4178

Passcode: 180903

Telephone numbers (as previously) 0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

NEXT SUNDAY 02.05.2021 5th Sunday of Easter

SERVICES 10.30am by Zoom, 12 noon in Church



READINGS

OT Acts 8: 26-end
NT 1 John 4: 7-end
Gospel John 15: 1-8

CONTACT US

Fr. David Nixon 01392 667192. Day off: Mondays
rev.dave@virgin.net

Revd Sarah Cumming Curate 07543604115
rev.sarahcumming@gmail.com

Revd. Alison Whiting Associate Priest
rev.alisonwhiting@gmail.com

Phil Baker, Reader 07970 216740
lionelbaker@outlook.com

Revd Terry Litherland 07594633195
tlitherland36@gmail.com

Ian Totterdell Church Warden 01392 848674
07961621001 ian.totterdell@cantab.net

Email: parishoffice@stthomaschurchexeter.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sttexeter

Website: www.stthomaschurchexeter.co.uk

Twitter: @sttexeter

Office Tel: 01392 437486 Messages at any time.



St Thomas, Exeter

Sunday 25th April 2021

4th Sunday of Easter

10.30 by Zoom (phone-in available)

12 noon Mass in Church

April 25 is also the feast day of **St Mark** the evangelist. As we ask the intercession of St Mark for our own work of spreading the Gospel, we also pray in this deanery for the clergy, ministers and people of St Mark's Church in Pinhoe Road:

Almighty God

who enlightened your holy Church through the inspired witness of your evangelist St Mark: grant that we, being firmly grounded in the truth of the gospel, may be faithful to its teaching in word and deed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Our prayers of recent have been with HM Queen and more locally Mary Daunton. Mary has said that if anyone wishes to give a gift in memory of **Chris Daunton**, it can be given to 'Remember That Song'. Details to follow.

Remember that there are **new Zoom codes** until the end of June—see middle panel.

Fr David



Collect

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: raise us, who trust in him, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that we may seek those things which are above, where he reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **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.'

Post Communion

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**

NOTICES

The winner of the 'Easter Joy' photography competition was Karen Williams, who has selected the Royal British Legion as her chosen charity. The U14s prize was won by Seren Woodland. The winning photos will be displayed outside church to share the Easter joy. Thank you to all who entered.

Knit and Natter Update for April 2021

We shall hope to meet in the park as last year. Meanwhile, we continue our Zoom meetings on Thursdays 11.15am to 11.55am thanks to Vanessa. All details from Jenny on 01392 498725.

Annual Meeting Sunday 16 May by Zoom, talk in Church.

Community Larder The Community Larder will be collecting on **Tuesdays only** from 10am-12noon, and is allowed to continue operating during the period of lockdown. The collecting point is in the Church Hall. Judith Southam has **home-made chutneys and marmalade for sale**. The jars are labelled with a full list of ingredients. All proceeds will be given to the Community Larder. Please continue to be generous.

House Group. Tuesday evenings. Please contact Ian Totterdell for Zoom details.

Electoral Roll revision Carolyn Bryant is revising the roll this year in advance of the APCM. Because of the current restrictions, we will assume that folk wish to continue on the roll unless they specifically tell us otherwise. If you are not on the roll and wish to be, contact the Parish Office by email or phone, Fr David or Ian Totterdell.

200 Club If you would like to join the 200 Club please see Andrew Withers.

