

The Lighthouse



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Norwich

Sunday, 25 April 2021
Issue 56

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Scripture Reading: John chapter 10 verses 11–18

‘I’ll never find another ewe.’

– The Seekers

Dear Friends. We are with the sheep this week. The good news in today’s reading is that Jesus is the good shepherd as opposed to the bad shepherd. The bad shepherd runs away from danger and protects himself, leaving the sheep to be attacked by wolves. The bad shepherd doesn’t own the sheep, so he has no obligation to care for them. The good shepherd, on the other hand, owns the sheep, cares for them to the point of laying down his life for them, knows them and calls them. The sheep know the good shepherd’s voice.

I’m loving ‘Our Yorkshire Farm’ on Channel 5 each Tuesday. 8-year-old Sid is taking on more responsibility, now that brother Reuben goes to work in Appleby. Sid’s new role is to train a sheepdog pup, who chews most things in sight, including Sid. Sid’s dad Clive is teaching his son how to train the sheepdog, including an attempt to whistle commands to the dog. This is a work in progress! I think Sid will prove to be a very good shepherd if he can learn to handle sheep like his 250cc trials-bike.

In our reading today, Jesus says that ‘I have other sheep, not of this sheep-pen’ [v 16]. In a broken world, there is always division, be it two royal brothers hardly on speaking terms, multi-million-pound soccer clubs wanting even more wealth, or clergy being treated shamefully because of the colour of their skin. We all too easily create our own boundaries, so that we flock together with likeminded people, creating security for ourselves, penned in for safety, resisting those who think differently.

As the good shepherd, Jesus brings together opposing factions. There is no greater difference or gulf than the perfection of a sinless, loving, Son of God, when contrasted with a self-centred, wayward, and lost sinner.

God as our shepherd is a major theme in the Old Testament; God caring for us as he brings back lost nations and lost individuals to understand his steadfast everlasting love. Isaiah the prophet puts it in a nutshell: ‘All we, like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all’ [Isaiah 53 v 6].

Thank you for those who have asked about my son Andrew and his long-distance running from Land’s End to John O’Groats. Andrew is now at Preston in Lancashire, on the M6.

Every blessing in Christ, Derek the Cleric.

Hands – Face – Space – Fresh air



Ideas for prayer

- + all those affected by coronavirus
- + our NHS workers, care workers and care home residents
- + key workers and those who provide essential services
- + our GPs, surgeries and staff tasked with caring for us and running the vaccination programme
- + people waiting to be called for a job and those going for their jobs
- + for co-operation among nations in dealing with the pandemic
- + our teachers and school staff
- + our collective health and welfare
- + our nation and community life; our Government and its advisors
- + for wisdom and patience as we deal with changes to our ways of life
- + our children and young people, their parents and caregivers
- + our young adults; our elderly neighbours and family members

Bible Readings

As from this week, the Bible readings which will be used in Church on the following Sundays will be put in The Lighthouse so it will give you the opportunity to look at them a week before the Service. The ones below are for Sunday, 2nd May. I hope you find this useful. Revd Adrian.

Bible Readings for Sunday, 2nd May – Fifth Sunday of Easter

First reading – Acts 8:26–40
Second reading – John 15:1–8

Services

9:30am each week at Dersingham Village Centre, and next week Holy Communion at 11am at St Nicholas Church, Dersingham. If you plan to attend, please remember to book in advance and to wear a face mask. Contact: secretary@stnicholasdersingham.org.uk

Contemporary Worship

The Gathering Contemporary Worship resumes today at 9:30am in the Dersingham Village Centre.

This is an informal, accessible service with a focus on welcoming children back into the worshipping community.

Chairs will be put out at a social distance for people to choose where to sit, and I hope this will help you feel more of a sense of being together rather than separated.

The team and I value and will be asking for insights about how we can develop and improve the Gathering while it is in the Village Centre, while also keeping within the national guidelines at the time.

With my prayers,
Rev Mark

We give thanks for:

- + the Easter Season
- + our church community, our families and friendships
- + the beauty of springtime and God's creation
- + God's grace, love and forgiveness and his help for our lives
- + progress being made in understanding and treating the coronavirus
- + our scientists, medics and care workers
- + our teachers, key workers and people providing essential services
- + our armed forces serving at home and overseas
- + acts of kindness, courage and selflessness
- + the comfort and reassurance of the Holy Spirit
- + that we can take our concerns to Jesus in prayer



We pray for all Christians in countries where they are persecuted for their faith.

TURKMENISTAN

Population 6 million. 68,000 Christians (1.1%)

Persecution against Christians in this repressive Islamic state comes largely from the government and from society. The government imposes many restrictions on church life. Unless their churches are registered, Christians are highly susceptible to police raids, threats, arrests and fines. Even Russian Orthodox and Armenian Apostolic churches may have their Sunday services monitored. The printing or importing of Christian materials is also restricted.

Prayer points

- Pray for an easing of heavy restrictions on Churches.
- Pray for the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of Church leaders.
- Pray that believers from Muslim backgrounds will be protected and that their communities will be powerfully impacted by their witness.

If you'd like to know more about the situation for Christians in Turkmenistan, do take a look at Open Doors' website and watch list: [Serving Persecuted Christians Worldwide - Turkmenistan - Open Doors UK & Ireland](#)

A prayer for Turkmenistan from Open Doors

Father God, thank You for the way in which You are working in and through the church in Turkmenistan. Continue this work and fill Your people with renewed joy at knowing and sharing in the sufferings of Christ. Protect Your people, help them stand strong and grant them wisdom and discernment to navigate restrictions and surveillance. Build Your church in Turkmenistan. Amen.

Thanks to Revd Adrian for providing these prayers for the persecuted church.

Tower News

The Abseil planned for May is postponed and a new date in the Autumn will be arranged.

Thank you.
Rev Mark



Ideas for prayer

- + all who are worried about, or who have lost, their jobs, livelihoods and businesses
- + all who are homeless
- + all who are suffering any injustice – racial, social, economic
- + anyone facing illness or medical treatment
- + all who feel isolated and those who cannot be with their families
- + those who have died
- + all who make our various worship services possible and all who attend
- + all who are visiting the church via our Facebook pages
- + families bereaved at this time and those not able to use the church as they would wish to
- + for wisdom and safety in the easing of restrictions in the months ahead
- + hope, encouragement and peace in all circumstances

A Thank You from Samaritan's Purse

I have had a nice letter from Samaritan's Purse about our shoebox efforts (*see box, right*).

So far as I understand, most of our 80-odd boxes that we sent went to Belarus in eastern Europe.

Thanks to everyone who supported this in November and December 2020, and hoping we can together do equally as well this coming winter!

Best wishes from Alan C.

Worship News

Dear All,

Here is an excerpt from the Rector's report I shared at the APCM meeting. I hope this will be helpful in offering a further insight into the steady steps the church is taking in the benefice, and the technical challenges we are seeking to address:

Looking ahead

Worship – Hybrid Worship

The immediate time ahead will be another learning curve as we seek to embrace a hybrid worship approach, which, in reality, means in-person church services but also, available online, either a live-streamed service or a recording posted later online as the actual service. I am sure there will be teething issues, but this is a necessary step to make online worship more sustainable in the future.

Why are we doing this?

Most people will not be aware of the many hours of planning, preparation, recording, editing, compiling, uploading, compressing and other requirements that happen in order to offer the weekly online worship. Rev Dave has done the bulk of the computer part for the last few months, with a lot of assistance from Tom, and I have chipped in. As services resume in buildings, we need now to enable the online worship capacity to continue and to be sustainable in a new form. We are trying to do this over the coming weeks.

As part of this we are looking at streaming the traditional service at Dersingham. This will need to be WiFi-permitting and using a sound system, which enables worshippers at home to be able to hear the service as well as those in church. Most will know of the microphone issues that are prevalent at St Nicholas – this including when I was preaching on Easter Sunday and when Ron led the intercessions last week, when the microphones cut out on both occasions.

We are now looking to bring forward the improvements to the audio system to as soon as we are able so that people can hear in worship. (These improvements are part of the re-imagining plans that have been continuing in the background – further update later in the year.) There has already been a kind offer of financial support towards a new audio system, which based on an old quote may be in the region of £11,000. The Ministry team are now working on this project and we will update you when we have both a fixed price and a time scale.

With my prayers,
Rev Mark

Hi Alan

(15th April 2021)

Thank you for being part of something amazing! In a time of uncertainty and challenges we are thrilled that through support like yours Operation Christmas Child in the United Kingdom has sent over 250,000 gift-filled shoeboxes to children around the world.

These gifts are given through local church partners and are a way to connect to their local community who are impacted by the generosity and unconditionality of the gifts.

Through your service and your Church's involvement, the impact of simple shoebox gifts is being felt by children and families across the world. It is a great blessing to serve alongside you and we are here to support you in any way that we can.

We look forward to keeping in touch with you and trust that your involvement with Operation Christmas Child will continue to be a joy to you and your group in the coming year.

Blessings

Trish Ellse, SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Regional Manager East of England | Operation Christmas Child

Wordsearch – The Good Shepherd

Thanks to Carol for this week's puzzle. All the words can be found in John chapter 10 verses 11 to 18.

L	S	R	T	S	R	C	H	I	B	N	E	H	V
A	E	R	L	E	L	F	A	S	F	E	T	K	L
Y	F	I	H	I	E	E	T	V	I	S	H	C	D
E	I	T	F	S	A	A	T	I	O	O	H	R	E
R	A	E	A	S	U	E	A	T	O	I	E	I	E
F	L	E	B	A	T	R	C	I	K	H	C	D	E
N	T	G	A	N	H	K	K	A	P	K	F	E	O
E	F	O	N	H	O	A	S	E	C	E	A	P	T
T	L	O	D	I	R	I	H	O	O	K	L	A	L
S	O	D	O	R	I	S	L	R	R	I	N	E	B
I	W	S	N	E	T	F	V	C	I	R	O	O	P
L	F	A	S	D	Y	E	A	A	K	D	C	A	W
A	I	O	E	I	S	C	A	T	T	E	R	S	U
R	O	E	A	S	H	E	E	P	S	T	N	D	H

FATHER
LIFE
ABANDONS
KNOW
ATTACKS
VOICE
SHEPHERD
WOLF
FLOCK
SCATTERS
AUTHORITY
SHEEP
HIRED
LISTEN
GOOD

Stopwatch: how quickly can you solve these anagrams?

ESP HE
VOID IS IN
SAY ART
STATS FADE
LEAVE STRING

(All are words found in Derek's letter. Answers, last page.)

Music in Country Churches

This much-loved concert series returns to St Nicholas Dersingham for two concerts in July.

The dates are Tuesday, 27th July and Wednesday, 28th July.

Apollo 5 will be singing on the first night and the English Chamber Orchestra Strings will play on the Wednesday. Tickets available in June. Stay tuned!

Rev Mark

Online Giving

The online giving links are a convenient way to make an offering for the church's ministry and mission. Online giving is managed by the Diocese of Norwich and all gifts will be attributed to the respective local church. Here are the links for our benefice:

St Nicholas, Dersingham –

<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/donate/?id=1888>

St Mary the Virgin, Anmer –

<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/donate/?id=1621>

St Michael and All Angels, Ingoldisthorpe –

<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/donate/?id=2154>

St Peter and St Paul's, Shernborne –

<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/donate/?id=2462>

If you prefer to give via standing order or direct debit, please contact benefice church secretary Pauline Martin, at 01485 544561 or secretary@stnicholasdersingham.org.uk, who will be able to direct you to the corresponding church treasurer. Please don't forget Gift Aid, as this means we can claim the tax back from HMRC where appropriate.

Hopefully, these options for giving will make it easier and more convenient for us to support the work of God's church.

Thank you for your support.

With my prayers,
Rev Mark



The M6 near Preston in 1966

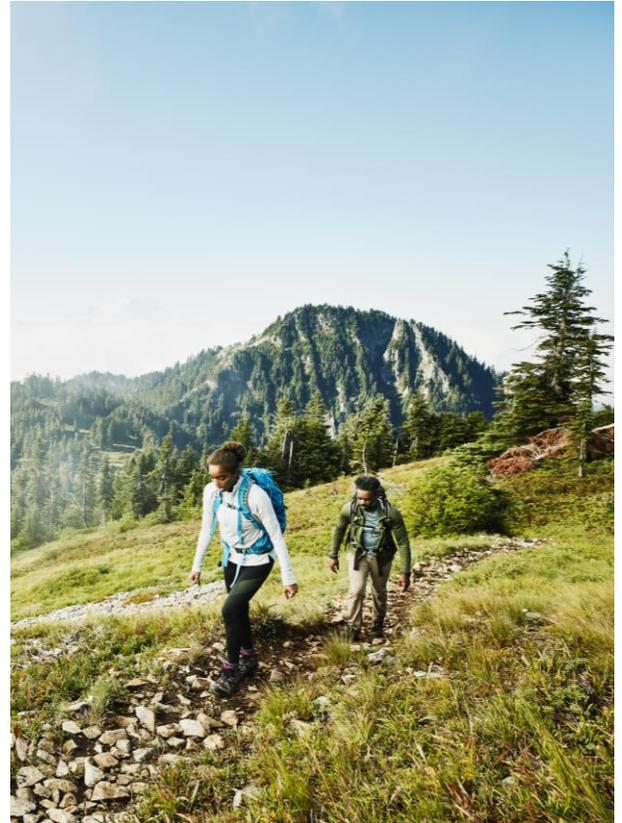
Photo: Phillip Capper, CC BY-NC 2.0

East or West

May the everlasting Father throw
His shield to shade you

Every east and west that you may go,
His shield to aid you.

–A traditional Celtic prayer from
Praying with Highland Christians



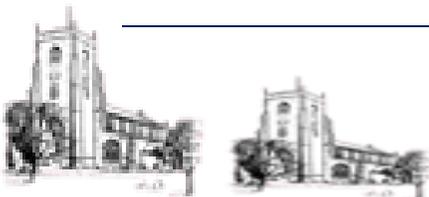
Anagrams:

sheep, division, astray, steadfast, everlasting

With help from: anagrammaker.com

“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.”

– John 10:14



www.stnicholasdersingham.org.uk
dersinghamonlineworship.com

