

Greetings to Christians Together in Orleton

A welcome to this week's Sunday Sheet from Mark

One of the things I miss most is our shared music, after years of singing daily services and decades of playing the organ most weeks. But the church has not quite fallen silent; the bell continues to ring on the hour and on special occasions – and I can now hear it from home, accompanied by birdsong. In relying on our memory of much-loved favourites, whether hymns or songs, the great choral works or the simple sung response, let's give thanks for every note, chord, phrase, line of verse or scripture which captured someone's imagination, whether churchgoer or not, and sang "God is here".

Sunday 3rd May Easter 4

Acts 2: 42 - 47

1 Peter 2: 19 – 25

John 10: 1 – 10

Sunday's Gospel Reading: John 10: 1 – 10

Jesus the Good Shepherd

"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again, Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

A Reflection on the Gospel from Don

In the book of Exodus, Moses meets God in a bush in the wilderness: a bush which seems on fire but is not burnt up and he is called to lead the people of Israel out of slavery. When Moses hears himself being called, he asks "who is this? What name shall I give people?". The answer is almost like a riddle: "I AM who I AM" - but it could be translated "I will be who I will be" That was seen as the 'name' of God: 'I AM'. In John's Gospel there's a series of sayings using that phrase. which are like 'windows' showing an image for God, 'signposts' pointing towards God's being with us in the world: "I AM" Bread, Water, Light, the Good Shepherd - try looking up these sayings through the gospel.

The gospel reading for today has one such saying: 'I AM the gate for the sheep'. There are two challenges for us in these words. How can we point to God in our world? and, What do we, in urbanised 21st century Western Europe really know about shepherds and sheep? Those are challenges which we have to carry with us - and look for ways of answering - beyond our worship. A clue may be found through the One who claims, in the words which end the reading: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly"

A Prayer from Stan

Loving God, we want to sit quietly in your presence.

We remember and silently offer thanks for all the ways that you provide for us...

We rejoice in the rest that you offer us in your presence...

We commit ourselves to be guided by you, to trust in your wisdom...

We open ourselves to the generosity of your love - beyond measure, beyond words, beyond our imagining...

We praise you that in times of joy and celebration, you are with us...

and in times of sadness, confusion and loss, you are with us...

For all time, and in whatever we face: you are our shelter, our security, the place where we will find a home.

We give you our heartfelt thanks. Amen.

My choice of Hymn today is The King of Love my Shepherd is

<https://youtu.be/U4-KQG2cLso>

I hope that the hymn fits in perfectly with Mark's thoughts in his welcome.

Please remember that Church and Chapel are now closed every day.

Good health and best wishes, John jsberry47@gmail.com

VE Day Commemorations

Next Friday 8th May was going to be a Bank Holiday full of celebrations commemorating the 75th anniversary of the formal ending of the second world war in Europe. However, there will be no street parties, lunch in the village hall, concert etc. because of the coronavirus pandemic 'lockdown'.

Instead there will be a decoration of the War Memorial with flowers providing an opportunity for quiet reflection remembering those at home, in the air, on the seas and in other countries who lost their lives during the six years of conflict.

Liz and Sara invite you to join them in making fabric flowers to decorate the War Memorial for the VE day commemoration. Flowers can be made of anything weather-proof (most wools, cotton fabric, felt, anything else you can lay your hands on), and can be of any colour. Please drop flowers off with Sara (2 Eagle Cottages, Church Lane) or Liz (Yew Tree House, 2 Millbrook Way, by the Memorial Garden), by Thursday morning (7th May). There will be boxes outside their houses. The display will be ready for viewing on Friday and though the rest of the month.

The Parish Giving Scheme

The PCC of St. George's is planning to introduce a new method of receiving regular donations to support the life and work of our church. The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) is a 21st-century solution to ensure that parish income can continue during this new way of life and beyond. Donations made through this scheme use Direct Debit (either on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis), and streamline our church's Gift Aid claim. In the next few weeks, members of the electoral role and the wider community will receive details of the Parish Giving Scheme and an invitation to change their current method of giving to the new scheme.

If you have any questions about the scheme and how it will help St. George's meet its current expenditure needs, please contact Mark Simmons (Churchwarden) or John Berry (Treasurer). As always, thank you for the support that so many in the parish give to St. George's to keep the church alive and available to the whole community.

Live Streaming of Worship

Each Sunday there is a live streaming to Facebook of a service from a church in the Diocese.

Date	Leader
3 May	Revd Sean Semple 10am
10 May	Revd Chris Moore 10am

Community Support during the Coronavirus crisis

School Lunches

Orleton School Food Community Interest Company (which provides the meals at the school) has been providing a 'meals on wheels' service in Orleton. A hot lunch, including a main, side, pudding and delivery, costs £2.50. We would love to be able to extend this offer to anyone in the community. Please phone the school on 01568 780366 between 9am and 10am any day of the week if you would like to take up this offer.