

**Hanging Heaton, Tingley and West
Ardsley Methodist Churches.
Sunday 3 May 2020**

Call to worship

Good morning from Ian Caveen and welcome on this 4th Sunday of Easter. We are also in the 6th week of lockdown. We live in strange times where the whole world is experiencing collective isolation to help reduce the spread of the coronavirus. It is also impacting people differently. My youngest son, who is living alone, is finding the lockdown difficult to cope with. Pam and I are also self-isolating with our 2 year old grandson, Joel, as his mother and his grandmother Mel are key workers.

The set reading for this morning's service from John 10: 1-10 is, I think, quite appropriate where Jesus is reminding his disciples that he is the gate and promises that anyone who comes in by him will be safe. May we put our trust in Jesus through these difficult and dangerous times.

Hymn [565 Only by grace](#)

Only by grace can we enter,
Only by grace can we stand;
Not by our human endeavour,
But by the blood of the Lamb.
Into Your presence You call us,
You call us to come.
Into Your presence You draw us,
And now by Your grace we come,
Now by Your grace we come.
Lord, if You mark our transgressions,
Who would stand?

Thanks to Your grace we are cleansed
By the blood of the Lamb. *(Repeat)*

Prayer

Almighty God, we come with reverence
to praise and worship you this morning.
One God, Three persons,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
We adore you.

Merciful God,
pour out your Holy Spirit upon us;
and as we read your word,
let us be filled with your holiness and love,
so that we may catch a glimpse of your
glory and become true reflections of you.

Father God,
may we learn to appreciate the significance
of your Son's death and resurrection. That
he went willingly to the cross, his broken
body, bearing the weight of our sin and
setting us free from the curse of death.
He being the forerunner,
the guarantee, of our eventual
bodily resurrection to eternal life.

We praise and thank you,
for inviting us to follow you;
for calling us by name;
for making yourself known to us;
grant that we may become true disciples
of your Son, Jesus Christ,
not holding onto bitterness
but forgiving each other
as you have forgiven us,
and to share your good news
of God's love and mercy to all. **Amen.**

Pam and I love camping. A good few years ago, whilst camping on Hadrian's Wall, there were sheep wandering in the field next to us. What I found quite amazing were the lambs who were able to distinguish their mothers' peculiar cries from the cacophony of other noisy sheep and then able to find their respective mothers. Like the lamb who knows its mother's voice so may we learn to recognize our Saviour's voice especially through these uncertain times.

Reading – [John 10: 1-10](#)

**[The next hymn is based on Psalm 23
Hymn 481](#)**

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.
*And I will trust in You alone.
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.*

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me,
and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

Lord's Prayer

Prayer of confession

In this time of lockdown may we learn to hear Christ's voice. He warned us that in the last days false prophets would come to try and mislead us (Matthew 7:15, 24:24). May we learn to discern Christ's true calling by studying God's word, obeying what it says (John 14:15), sharing with our brethren in need (1John 3: 16-18) and treating each other with kindness and patience.

Spend a moment of silence when we can reflect on what he is telling us. Maybe we have been trying hard to earn God's love. Maybe we need to say sorry for not putting God first or maybe for saying or thinking hurtful things about other people.

We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the LORD has laid on him the guilt and sin of us all' (Is 53:6).



Jesus has taken the burden of our sin onto his shoulders by dying on the cross. Let us spend a brief moment, in silence, remembering the things that spoil our relationship with God.

Silence

Heavenly Father, forgive us we pray, for being selfish in your world today.

You have given us the run of the land, to sow and harvest with your helping hand. You gently instruct us to watch and tend, but we vandalize, abuse and offend, your world, our neighbour and our Creator, saddening your Son, mankind's Saviour.

We have taken your world for granted, and have spoilt what you have created; We have failed to share our wealth fairly, and been un-caring and un-friendly. The world's people cry in hopeless despair, at mankind's inability to share. Heavenly Father, forgive us we pray, for being selfish in your world today.

Thank you that you're greater than our meanness, and much stronger than our destructiveness, giving us a fresh start, a new beginning, a second chance, a new way of living. Our only hope rests in Jesus Christ your Son, by his death and new life the battle's won. He alone gives us the seeds of faith and love, a new life by God's Spirit from above.
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We thank God that our salvation rests in Christ and what he did for us by dying on the cross. That is what grace is, God's riches at Christ's expense. Grace can't be earned it is a free gift.

Prayer of intercession

Let us remember the many millions of people worldwide who are suffering the effects of the coronavirus and the health workers, carers, police and fire services

who are risking their lives to keep us safe. Pray for those who have lost loved ones due to the coronavirus and the many who are struggling to cope mentally with the lockdown.

Hymn 287 – [When I survey](#)

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God:
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down:
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of Nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

A prayer of blessing

*Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!*

Now to the Father
who is able to do immeasurably more
than all we ask or imagine,
according to his power
that is at work within us,
to him be glory in the church
and in Christ Jesus
throughout generations,
for ever and ever!

Stay safe. **Amen.**