

Service for Caversham Park URC – Sunday 30 April 2023 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

## Preparing to hear God's Word

### Call to Worship

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Welcome to Caversham Park United Reformed Church, as we continue to celebrate Easter.  
Welcome to you whether you are here in the room or watching from elsewhere.

Would anyone like to light candles?

So let us proclaim the good news again:

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

HYMN

As we are gathered

### Prayers of Approach, Adoration and Confession

God who is love,  
before time, beyond time  
you are the ground of reality;  
everything belongs to you,  
all things are intended to express love;  
your whole being is love.

God who is life,  
on earth and beyond earth,  
you are the source of meaning;  
in darkness and death you are a light,  
in doubt and despair you are a friend;  
your whole being is life.

God who is truth,  
in words and beyond words,  
you are the fountain of hope;  
justice and peace are your promise,  
faith and love are your way,  
your whole being is truth.

**Amen.**

*Terry Oakley*

Then the good shepherd calls his friends and neighbours together and says to them 'I am so happy I have found my sheep. Let us celebrate.' (Luke 15:6)

We are so grateful, Lord God, this morning that you never abandon us to our wilfulness and our stupidity.

Many times, Lord, we deserve to be left in the messes we have created for ourselves. But you gently come to seek us, and like the good shepherd, disentangle us from the bramble-patches into which we have fallen and set us on our feet again.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts that you never give up on us.

**Amen**

*Jennifer Martin*

### Assurance of Pardon

You are free.

The grace of God through Jesus makes you free.

Accept the grace of God.

Your sins are forgiven.

You are free.

**Amen**

*Nigel Warner*

HYMN                      I'm accepted, I'm forgiven

## Hearing God's Word

### Theme Introduction

Today we will think about Jesus as the Good Shepherd, and about how the earliest Church worshipped, shared and grew.

### Collect for the Day

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**

First Reading              Acts 2.42-47              Paula

HYMN                      The Lord's my shepherd

Second Reading     John 10.1-10     Margaret

HYMN                Jesus the Lord said “I am the Bread”

Sermon

## Responding to God’s Word

HYMN                Restore, O Lord

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

The response to “Lord, hear us” is “**Lord, graciously hear us**”.

For this Church, for its witness to the risen Christ and its service to the community, and for its Elders and all who lead us.

For the URC and for the whole universal Church.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

For peace, justice and wise government in all the world.

For peace in Sudan, Ukraine and wherever there is conflict.

For King Charles, Queen Camilla and the coronation next weekend.

For the Government, Parliament and all its members, particularly for Matt Rodda our MP.

For the local elections on Thursday, and all election officials, candidates and workers, and especially for the candidates in Emmer Green Ward: Matt Buckley, Pieter de Boiserie, Stephen Goss and Wendy Rooke. That we may be guided rightly in our choice, and that new councillors will act wisely for the community.

On the eve of May Day we pray for all workers and trade unions, and for fair settlements in the current industrial disputes.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

For our neighbourhood, and all who are linked to us as family and friends.

For Daniel Clarke and his wife Ivy, and for their wedding celebrations in China which Shirley has travelled to.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

For all who are sick or suffering in any way, and particularly for those whom we know:

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

For those who have died, asking that we may share with them in Christ's risen life.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Merciful Father,

**Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.**

**Amen.**

### The Lord's Prayer

### The Offering

Loving God, we bring these our gifts,  
in thanksgiving for all that you have given us;  
asking that we may be servants of others and witnesses to your love.  
In the name of Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

### HYMN

Thine be the glory

### The Blessing

The God of peace,  
who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,  
that great shepherd of the sheep,  
through the blood of the eternal covenant,  
make us perfect in every good work to do his will,  
working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight.

**Amen.**

And we bless one another with the Grace:

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and for ever. Amen.**