

# Church Together

Jesus - I Am The Good Shepherd  
16th January 2022



# Welcome

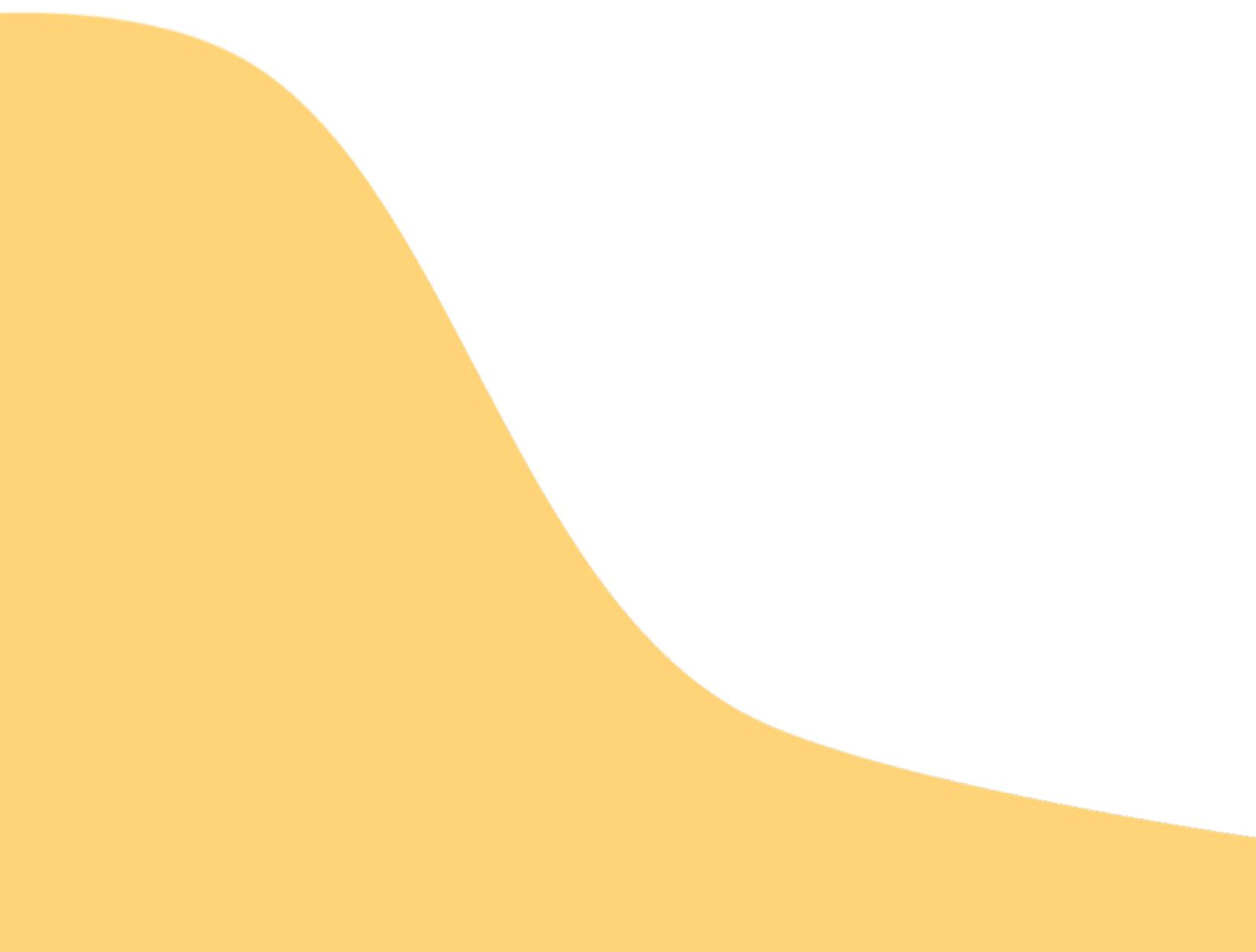
Welcome to **Church Together**.

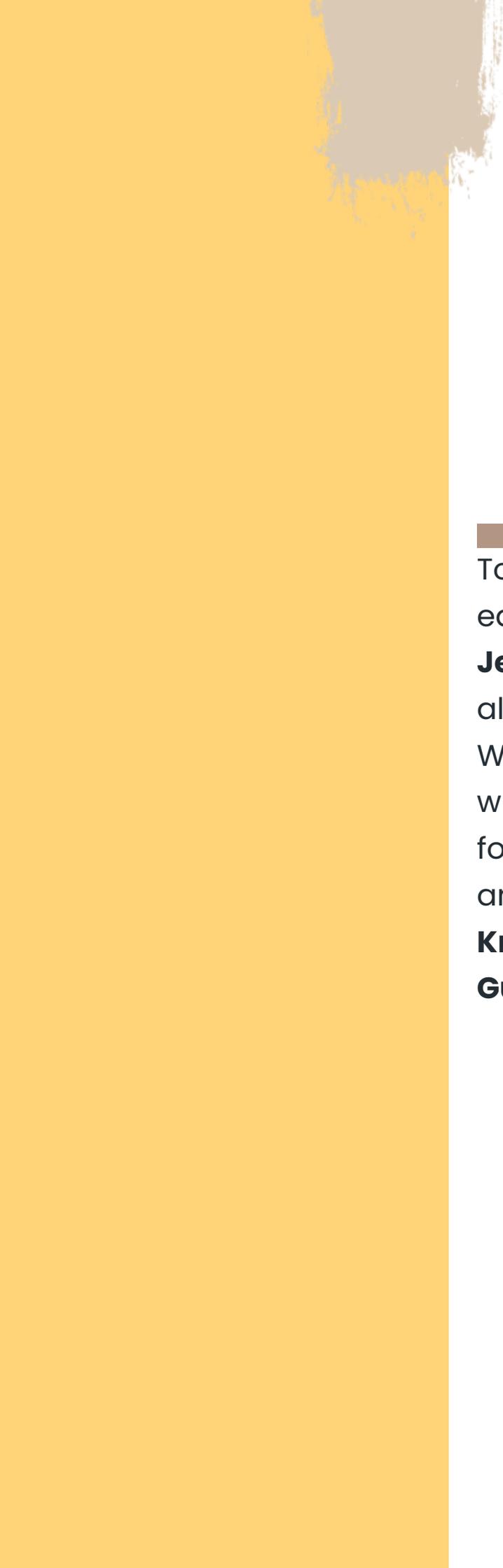
**No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together.**

Our flexible Sunday worship patterns blend together on - line services, home deliveries and E - mailed copies of Church Together.

Today's Service for this third Sunday in 2022 will be looking at: **John 10 v. 1 - 16**

The theme for today's service is: **Jesus - I Am The Good Shepherd**





Today's service that is set out in this edition of **Church Together** is looking at **Jesus - I Am The Good Shepherd**. We will also be sharing **Communion** together. We hope that you will be able to engage with everything that has been produced for our **Third Sunday Service Of 2022** and that you would indeed **Know That Jesus Is The Shepherd Who Guides You In Life If You Will Allow Him.**

# Call To Worship

## Psalm 23 v. 1 - 6 NLT

The Lord is my shepherd;  
I have all that I need.  
He lets me rest in green meadows;  
he leads me beside peaceful streams.  
He renews my strength.  
He guides me along right paths,  
bringing honour to his name.  
Even when I walk  
through the darkest valley,  
I will not be afraid,  
for you are close beside me.  
Your rod and your staff  
protect and comfort me.  
You prepare a feast for me  
in the presence of my enemies.  
You honour me by anointing my head with  
oil.  
My cup overflows with blessings.  
Surely your goodness and unfailing love  
will pursue me all the days of my life,  
and I will live in the house of the Lord  
forever.



# Opening Prayer

Lord God, creator of all things, for your love for humankind: for your love for each person: for the great and mysterious opportunity of life: for the life of your Spirit within us: for the gifts of your Spirit: we praise and worship you today; Lord Jesus.

**Amen**

---

# Song Suggestion

Christ Triumphant, Ever Reigning



# Bible

# Reading

## John 10 v. 1 – 16 NIV

### The good shepherd and his sheep

10 'Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognise a stranger's voice.' 6 Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

7 Therefore Jesus said again, 'Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

11 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down

his life for the sheep. 12 The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. 13 The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

14 'I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me – 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

# Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

Now that we find ourselves once again holding services in Church, we are able to give of our finances to the work of the Lord when we are in church.

If you feel that your are able to, then please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.



---

# Song Suggestion

Tell Out My Soul, The Greatness  
Of The Lord



# Communion

Today is a Sunday when we would normally share communion together. We come together today remembering the love and sacrifice that Jesus made on the Cross for our sins and for our forgiveness. We gather together here in Church or at home as the body of Christ in order to share the bread and the cup together.

We are able to do this by getting a small glass of red juice (fruit juice, squash etc.) and a small piece of bread and 'sharing these elements' at a time that is convenient to you.

(Normally as a church we will do this during the service at about 11.30am.)

Our normal practice is to say these words:

For I received from the Lord what I pass on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, (you might like to pray at this point) he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' (this is the time to eat the bread). In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' (now is the time to drink the cup). For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11 v. 22 - 26

If you would like to do this today with us, if you are at home, then please do so, and may the Lord's richest blessings be with you today.

# Church Together Thought

Although many people have tried to find modern equivalents to the shepherd imagery of the Bible for pastoral care today, few of them carry the same wealth of meaning.

Jesus' words in **John 10** would have found many echoes with his hearers.

In the Old Testament, the shepherd image was particularly related to David; **2 Samuel 5 v. 2** reflects this when it says: In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the Lord said to you, "You shall shepherd my people Israel, and you shall become their ruler." and the promise of the Messiah is seen in **Micah 5 v. 2 – 5**. David also appreciated the ways in which God himself acted as a shepherd for the people of Israel (**Psalms 23**).

When Jesus claims to be the good shepherd, he is presenting himself as the Messiah, the true king, the faithful leader and guide – the

Son of God. In contrast to those who came before (the religious leaders), Jesus is genuinely concerned about the flock and knows them intimately.

This is a shepherd who will not rest until all who belong to him have been restored to the safety of the fold. Indeed, his commitment to their welfare extends to giving up his own life willingly. In his presence there is nourishment, strength and refreshment.

### **Good shepherds**

At times in the history of the Church, the 'shepherding' role of leaders has been exercised in rather heavy - handed ways, and the 'flock' has been treated like ignorant sheep! Such approaches fail to help Christians grow and mature in their faith. Furthermore, although particular individuals in the Church are called to exercise a 'pastoral' role, we are all called to share in the ministry of Jesus in caring for others. This involves modelling our lives on the good shepherd.

We are all called to create the right atmosphere in which those in our care can thrive. Jesus demonstrated in a practical way that his disciples were to serve one another and prove their discipleship by the love they showed for one another.

## **ILLUSTRATION**

It has been said that the famous Irish singer, Dana, had felt 'lukewarm' about God until she was prayed for in a small prayer group. It was during this time that she had an overwhelming feeling of being loved by God – something she had never experienced before. She said that it was unlike any human love. She felt she had met with God – the God who treasured her.

The New Testament word we usually translate as 'fellowship' (***koinonia***), means a sharing of life. This is a costly business, but being a Christian is not a private affair! In Jesus' parable, the lost sheep is brought back to the flock, to the life of the community (**Luke 15 v. 1 - 7**).

### **Facing danger**

The shepherd's courage is based on trust in God and is seen in the self - giving love of Jesus. It is a courage which doesn't shy away from getting involved and is prepared to walk with others, even when the going gets tough (**Psalm 23 v. 4**). Jesus himself walked where we walk, and he walks with us still. He is our eternal companion, an ever - present friend with the ability to give sustenance.

Just spend a moment and think through whether you or the church you maybe belong to enables people to be companions,

sharing lives and offering support? Are we deriving courage from the good shepherd to make it so? What do we learn about Jesus from the image of the shepherd?

Maybe the following points help us to answer some of these questions:

## **JESUS IS THE GATE THAT PROTECTS US**

A gate across a staircase keeps a crawling baby or a toddler safe but allows access to others. A garden gate may be kept locked to keep out intruders; but what about Jesus, the Good Shepherd being our gate!

At night, the shepherd in Bible times led their flocks to lie down in a natural sheep pen (an area boxed in by brush or rocks). The shepherd slept in the open and literally became the gate to the sheepfold. With his own body he would protect the sheep from wild animals and robbers. This is what Jesus, the Gate and the Good Shepherd, does for us.

The 'gate' of a sheepfold was often the person or the shepherd lying across the entrance (**John 10 v. 1, 2, 7-9**). Enemies could only grab a sheep from the shepherd, literally '**over his dead body**'. By sacrificing his life for us, Jesus has provided the means for our protection from the evil one. In Christ we can find security, knowing that he is watching over us.

## **JESUS IS THE ONE WHOM WE MUST FOLLOW**

### **ILLUSTRATION**

Tom Walker in his book, 'Renew us by your Spirit', tells the story of a 'shepherd' who failed his flock. In his book he says: 'Some young people from a church were on holiday in Wales. A curate took them for a mountain walk: 'Gradually the path became steeper, until without warning the curate plunged off the narrow pathway ... "Are you sure this is right?" one of the young people asked, as they followed nose to tail, straggling out in a long line like a procession of mountain sheep.

"Of course, it's right", shouted the curate ... He waved the map, but none of them dared to challenge him ... He pooh - poohed the doubts expressed by his followers ... Only when they got back to base after such hair - raising experiences on the windy slopes did the true facts emerge. As the curate showed his route on the map to more experienced hikers, they said with one voice: "But that's not a footpath - that's the county boundary!"

There are times that we think we are going in the right direction, well because we know best! However, like the sheep who know the voice of their shepherd, so too must we be prepared to give up our own way of doing

things and ultimately turn to the Good Shepherd to be our guide and protector. Have we heard him calling us? How can we know what is his 'voice' (**John 10 v. 3 - 5**)? He offers us life to the full (**v. 10**) - nothing insipid!

## **IIUSTRATION**

Gordon MacDonald, in his book, 'The Life God Blesses', wrote about the now late Cardinal Basil Hume who reflected upon his boyhood and his not infrequent attempts to raid the biscuit tin in his mother's kitchen. Cardinal Basil Hume reflected on his mother's words, when she would protest and say to him in a stern voice and warn him that God saw his hand in the biscuit tin and would one day be harsh with him. This was hardly an adequate deterrent! Then, the late Cardinal Hume told his listeners, 'Now, today, I half expect that when I someday stand before God, the Lord will raise the subject of the biscuit tin and say, "Basil, why didn't you take two?" Hume's God is a kind God. This is just as accurate as the view of God as judge. The judge and the shepherd are just two of the many attributes of the infinite and holy God.

## **THE GOOD SHEPHERD JESUS GAVE UP HIS LIFE TO SAVE US**

The shepherd knows each of his sheep by name and they know and respond only to

his voice. In like manner, Jesus knows our personalities, needs, feelings and desires. He even knows our faults and our sins, yet he still loves us!

He calls out to us and leads us in the way that is best for us. To be set free from the pain of our past, we need to respond to the guiding voice of our Shepherd, who knows us fully and loves us completely.

The full life - the risen life of Jesus himself - is freely offered to us because Jesus has already paid the price (v 15). Are we still trying to 'buy' God's forgiveness by attempting to pile up good points in our favour?

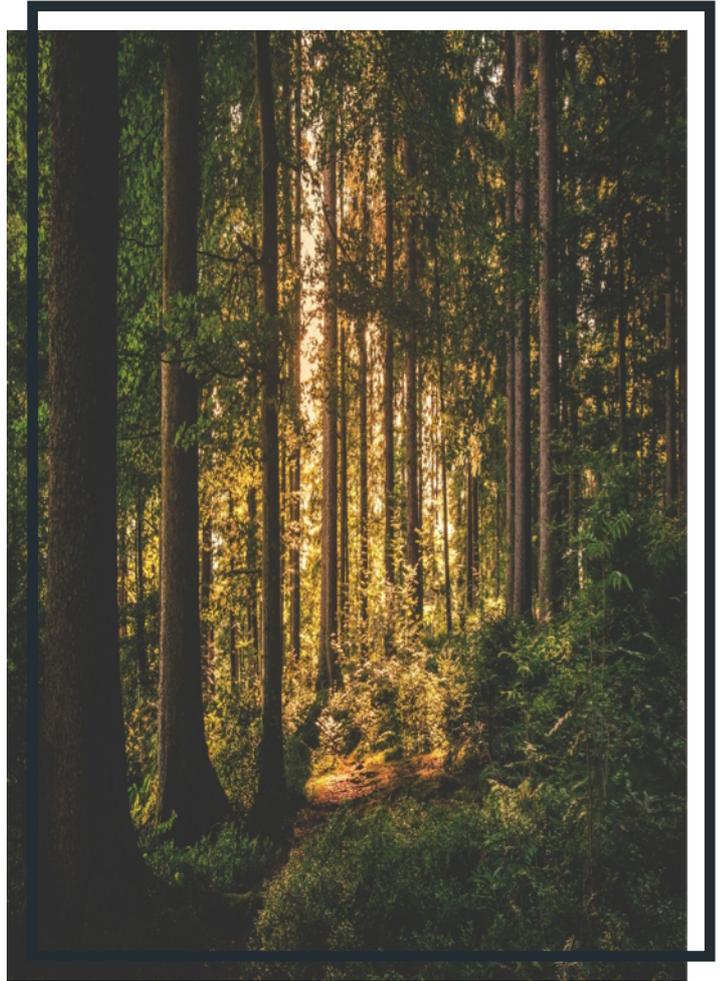
He loves us without any of that, but because he is just, our sin still has to be dealt with. Christ's death alone could and has achieved that. If you alone had sinned, he would have died for you. Such is his love.

What is your response?

---

# Song Suggestion

I, The Lord Of Sea And Sky





I am the good Shepherd;  
the good Shepherd lays  
down His life for the sheep.

**John 10:11**

# Prayers of Intercession

God of all creation, you hold the depths of the earth in your hands. You are closer to us than the air we breathe. Fill our souls with your wonderful love and light. Give us strength and courage to reflect that love and light in the world. Let us never shrink back from who we are in you or hide our light inside ourselves. Renew in us a sense of joy, painting the dark shadows around us with your light, your love and your salvation.

God of grace and compassion our hearts are full of gratitude as we think of the many blessings in our lives:

The gift of faith to believe in you, the love of family and friends, for shelter, clean water and plentiful food, for access to education and health care, for the freedom and speech and the freedom of movement.

As we turn our attention to the world, may we never lose sight of the fact that we are all connected because of what Jesus has done for us. The success and failure of others is our success and failure. The suffering and joy of others is our suffering and joy.

We understand that the privileges that we enjoy are your will for all people and we grieve for those who don't share

these basic human rights. Help us, as we struggle with the ever – present ambiguity of our faith, to see your compassion, and keep us aware of our responsibility to reach out in compassion to those whose lives are a constant struggle for survival.

Lord God, we pray for our community:

For teachers as they bring to fruition their preparations at the beginning of this new school term. For healthcare and social workers in their mission to improve the wellbeing of those who are sick and unwell. For those in the armed forces as they prepare for their next challenges in a dangerous world. For volunteers, carers and those who undertake work for which they are not paid. For our church today and in the coming weeks as we seek to discern your will for our future here at Salendine Nook. Lord, guide and inspire our community, in all that we do this week and beyond.

Lord, in deep gratitude, for this moment, this place, this world we give ourselves to you. Take us from here later loving Lord, to live as changed people, because we have been touched by the living Lord, and cannot remain the same when we have met with you. Ask much of us loving Lord, expect much of us, enable much by us, encourage many through us. Living Lord, accept our lives and accept our prayers this day and every day. You have the words of eternal life and in you we trust.

**Amen**

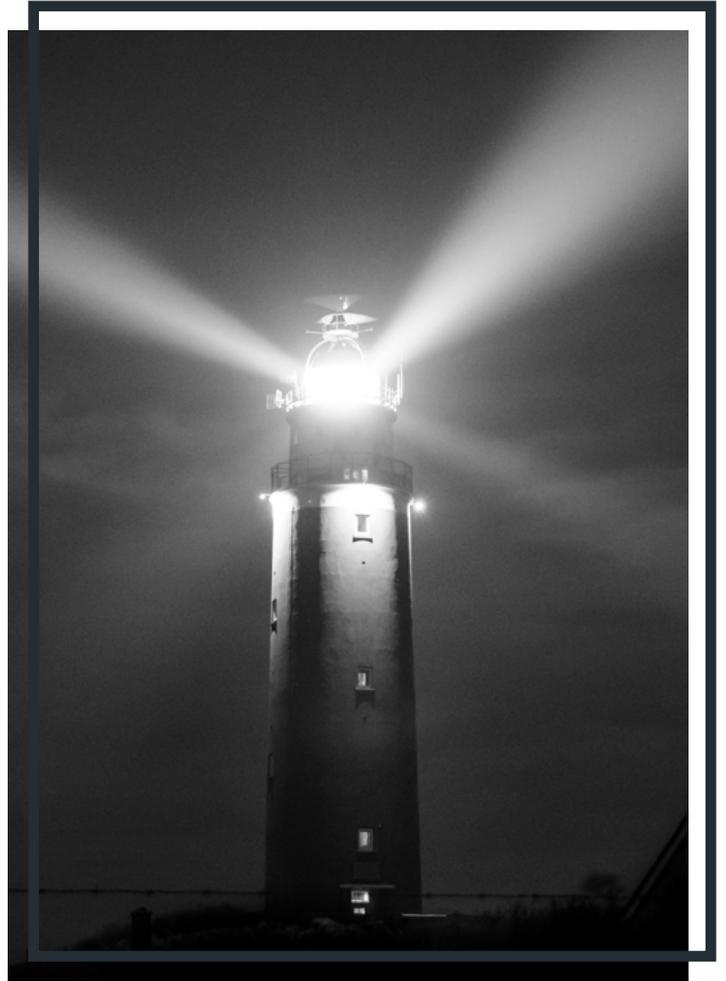
# The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power  
And the glory, forever and ever.  
**Amen**

---

# Song Suggestion

The Lord's My Shepherd



# Blessing

---

We have gathered here today,  
Lord God as your people to offer you  
our sacrifice of prayer and worship.

May the love of Jesus Christ  
bring us wholeness,  
the grace of God the Father  
grant us peace,  
the breath of Holy Spirit  
instil within us passion  
and the unity between them  
give us strength  
for this and every day.

**Amen**