

21st June 2020

## ***Hearsall at Home***

Hello, and welcome to Hearsall at Home.

Today's service includes Holy Communion. Please arrange for some bread and wine or juice to share at the appropriate moment.

We hope that you listen to this service either on a Sunday morning, or at another time, and you will worship, sing, pray and reflect on the scriptures along with all of us.

A written copy of the service is also available as a download on our website, so if you know anyone who would like that please let us know.

Afterwards you'll find me in my Whereby room: Bring your cup of coffee to [whereby.com/sutcliffechat](https://whereby.com/sutcliffechat) and see who's there. There's still room for more!

So sit down, be still, and prepare yourself to worship God with us.

Order of Service 21 6 2020  
**Into the Unknown**

Invitation to Worship

When God liberated his people with a mighty arm from the slavery of Egypt he led them into the strange place of the desert. Yet he went before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to guide them in an unknown land. We worship the Lord who goes with us into whatever future we may be facing.

Hymn (BPW 593)

Guide me, O Thou great Redeemer  
Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,  
Hold me with Thy pow'ful hand.  
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,  
Feed me till I want no more;  
Feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain,  
Whence the healing stream doth flow;  
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar  
Lead me all my journey through.  
Strong Deliv'rer, strong Deliv'rer,  
Be Thou still my Strength and Shield;  
Be Thou still my Strength and Shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
Bid my anxious fears subside;  
Death of death and hell's Destruction,  
Land me safe on Canaan's side.  
Songs of praises, songs of praises,  
I will ever give to Thee;  
I will ever give to Thee.

Prayer (drawn from the writings of Karl Rahner)

What can I say to you, my God? Shall I give you all the names of this world, You, the unnameable? Shall I call you God of my life, meaning of my existence, hallowing of my acts, my journey's end, bitterness of my bitter hours, home of my loneliness, You, my most treasured happiness? Shall I say, Creator, Sustainer, Pardoner, Near One, Distant One, Incomprehensible One, God both of flowers and stars, God of the gentle wind and of terrible battles, Wisdom, Power, Loyalty and Truthfulness, Eternity and Infinity, You the All-Merciful, You the Just One, You are Love itself. O Lord my God, most merciful, most secret, most present, most constant, yet changing all things, never new and never old, ever in action, yet ever quiet, creating, upholding and perfecting all; who has anything but your gift? Yet what can any person say when speaking of you? Yet have mercy upon me O Lord, that I may speak to you, and Praise your name. Amen

And we speak to God now in the words our Saviour taught us:

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

### Behind Closed Doors

*Ana Roman*

Hello to everyone at Hearsall, my name's Ana if you didn't already know it and today I will be speaking to you about how lockdown has affected me as an individual. To begin with, lockdown has affected me in a positive although negative way, starting with the fact that I had a lot of work to complete and I found it very difficult to settle into that routine of getting up at a certain time and doing the work for a certain day or for a certain time as well. However my teachers have helped me quite a lot and they have been very, very understanding regarding sixth form.

I have found this time a very productive time, a time where I've read a time where I've prayed more, a time where I've cleaned, and helped my mum, and spent family time and just focused on myself as a person which I think I needed. Life was getting very stressful for me, just before lockdown started and I feel like it has helped me to realise what career I want to go into. I have taken part in online lessons regarding Law, and it has helped me begin to build that pathway towards Law.

However, one negative thing that I can say about lockdown is the fact that I am always on the move, let's say, I am a very energetic person who likes to go out. I like to communicate with people and I haven't had the chance to go to sixth form and spend time with my friends and go see my friends and go to the Library where I would usually be on my half days from school. However, I have had loads of messages from my friends, I've kept in touch with my teachers regularly. It's just not the same, being around your friends and teachers.

And church obviously I haven't been to church for a very, very long time and I really do miss it. I feel a bit privileged though because people have suffered from this deadly virus and I feel protected at home and for me as an individual, as a student it's been a great time to get your life together, to relax in a way and not always be forced into that yes, get up at seven O'clock, come back at a certain time going out and getting back at a certain time. It would drain me and I would have no energy left. Because my lessons would be so intense and I've had so much work.

However I feel like a bit more laid back during quarantine. And I am going back to school next week; I think so. However I have loved lockdown. I've loved the fact that I've been able to watch more movies, read a bit, just relax and just focus unbecoming a better person. However, I hope that everyone is well and safe, and I miss you all and I can't wait to be back at church and give everyone a big, big hug and just catch up on anything. See you later!

And we thank Ana for her refreshing and fascinating article. Have you loved lockdown I wonder?

### Offering

And now, our Lord, we do acknowledge that all we have comes from you and we are but stewards of the good gifts we enjoy. Take the gifts we offer to church and to charity, and take the gifts of our time and talents, and use them all to bless other people, and to care for this beautiful world. For Jesus' sake. Amen

I wonder what challenges you face in life right now. Life is sometimes tough, so our next song is an encouragement to one another to have courage. Don't be shy, sing out, and do the actions.

### Song

Be Bold, Be Strong  
For The Lord Your God Is With You  
Be Bold, Be Strong  
For The Lord Your God Is With You  
I Am Not Afraid, I Am Not Dismayed  
Because I'm Walking In Faith And Victory  
Come On And Walk In Faith And Victory  
For The Lord Your God Is With Yo.

I Am Not Afraid, I Am Not Dismayed  
Because I'm Walking In Faith And Victory  
Come On And Walk In Faith And Victory  
For The Lord Your God Is With You

### Our prayers this week are led by Louise Prue.

Lord – we come before you today with our minds full of trepidation, with anxiety for those we love and questions about the future. But, in the words of the first hymn, we acknowledge we are weak and you, Lord, are mighty and so we ask that you help our anxious fears subside and that we know the reassurance of being held in your powerful hands.

Lord, on this **Fathers' Day** we pray for fathers everywhere – our own and those we know. We thank you for the special gift of time that many fathers have had to spend with their children recently; we pray for dads who are juggling working from home and home schooling their children, who find it hard to concentrate while they are working in a noisy, chaotic or crowded home. We pray for parents who are anxious about the future – about what the future holds for their jobs, for those on furlough, for those worried about finances. We pray for parents who are separated from their children at this time of lockdown, for those who have chosen to separate themselves from their families because their jobs carry increased risk of contracting COVID 19. We pray for parents whose jobs are extra stressful at this time.

We pray for lee and Sarah, currently in Germany – we pray for their new baby, Avelyn, and for the children, Rouven, Livia and Yves, as they come out of lockdown and can spend time with Sarah's family again.

In a moment of silence we lift up to the Lord parents who we know.

**Lord in your mercy ..... Hear our prayer**

At the end of Refugee Week, we pray for those who are separated from family members who are overseas, refugees trying to access safety in Europe. Lockdowns have made it harder for refugees to travel. We pray for their safety, and for compassionate policy-making from leaders.

Lord, we pray for **children and young people and adults in education** – we pray for those struggling as they find new ways of studying, for those battling with the vagaries of computer technology, with unpredictable internet connections and all the challenges that online study brings. We pray for students whose futures will be decided not by exams but by predicted grades based on previous work – we pray Lord for teachers who have had to make very difficult decisions, under huge pressure and tight time scales. We pray for **Ana** as she explores a future studying law and we thank you, Lord, that she has felt encouraged and supported by staff at school.

Let us spend a moment lifting up to you Lord teachers and school children and students that we know.

**Lord in your mercy ..... Hear our prayer**

Lord, in your world there are so many who are suffering and we lift up to you the work of aid agencies who are working so hard to meet people's needs:

We pray for the work of **Christian Aid** - campaigning for debt cancellation for the world's poorest countries; we pray for those in Bangladesh and India in the aftermath of Cyclone Amphan in May – for those who were afraid to leave their homes in the face of the pandemic and those made homeless or surrounded by catastrophe and debris. Comfort them as they journey and where they stay. We thank you Lord for the alternative ways money has been raised in Christian Aid week – we pray for those who have to work out priorities in spending in these straitened times.

We lift up to you the work of **Amnesty International** – when tackling human rights crises are made all the more difficult during this global pandemic.

We pray for those who peacefully campaign for equality for people of colour – for each of us in our responsibility to work for equality for people of black and minority ethnic origin. We pray for protection against those who seek to harm and disrupt peaceful protest and to promote hatred in our communities.

You Lord are our strong deliverer – be our strength and shield in adversity, conflict, times of anxiety – as well as in times of unity and joy.

**Lord in your mercy .....hear our prayer.**

**And together as the people of God, wherever we are, we say together – Amen**

## Bible Readings

Exodus 12: 24 - 32

24 'Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants. 25 When you enter the land that the Lord will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. 26 And when your children ask you, "What does this ceremony mean to you?" 27 then tell them, "It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians." Then the people bowed down and worshipped. 28 The Israelites did just what the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron.

29 At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on the throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner, who was in the dungeon, and the firstborn of all the livestock as well. 30 Pharaoh and all his officials and all the Egyptians got up during the night, and there was loud wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead.

31 During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, 'Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the Lord as you have requested. 32 Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me.'

Matthew 14: 22 - 33

22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. 23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, 24 and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

25 Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. 'It's a ghost,' they said, and cried out in fear.

27 But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.'

28 'Lord, if it's you,' Peter replied, 'tell me to come to you on the water.'

29 'Come,' he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!'

31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?'

32 And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. 33 Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

It's a strange story! Would you have joined Peter and climbed out of the boat? Well, maybe you would, if Jesus had asked you. We don't always understand life's mysteries, but we take comfort in Jesus' presence with us, whatever we may face. Our next song explores that idea. Your love for me is a mystery.

### Song

Your love for me is a mystery  
Your love for me is a mystery  
And I don't understand  
How You can keep on loving me  
Exactly as I am  
Though I may not understand You  
One thing I know  
You are all my heart desires  
Lord don't ever let me go

You're precious always near to me  
And I am feeling sure  
That You will never ever let me down  
I know that I'm secure  
Though I may not understand You  
One thing I know  
You are all my heart desires  
Lord don't ever let me go

In those times when I have let You down  
You're never standing far away  
All I've had to do is turn my face to You  
To find where love and mercy lay

And Your forgiveness floods my being  
A river deep and wide  
A stream of living water  
Flows from deep inside  
And I still don't understand You  
But this I know  
You'll always be my heart's desire  
I can't ever let You go  
Lord don't ever let me go

Lord don't ever let me go

And now, loving Lord, as we reflect on your scriptures together let us hear your living Word.  
Amen.

### Sermon

#### *Into the Unknown*

Matthew's gospel is thought to have been written for a Jewish Christian church under a double attack. Fellow Jews rejected them for being Christian. Christians rejected them for being too Jewish. It was a stormy situation for them.

So Matthew takes Mark's account of the *Jesus walking on the water* story and beefs it up a bit. Mark had the disciples amazed at Jesus' walking on the water, whereas Matthew has

them worshipping him and saying he is the Son of God. And Matthew adds the account - maybe he got it from Peter - of Peter getting out of the boat and trying water-walking for himself.

The previous day, Jesus had heard about the brutal death of his relative John. He had taken the disciples to pray and rest, but they had been followed by the crowds and the result was the feeding of the five thousand miracle. Tired out, Jesus had dismissed the crowd, packed the disciples into a boat and climbed the hill to pray.

But even the night had not gone well - certainly not for those disciples. Maybe Jesus could see their trouble from his vantage point on the hillside. By the way, Jesus appears to have been praying from dusk till maybe gone 3am - the text says it was the fourth watch of the night when he walked on the water, which was 3am - 6am. Anyway he looks up - or down - and sees them on the water. Or senses their need; they may have been invisible on a cloudy night, though perhaps a moon gave some illumination.

Jesus now behaves in a God-like way. Psalm 77 verse 19, says of God, *Your path led through the sea, your way through the mighty waters, though your footprints were not seen.* The sea was a place of terror in Jewish thought - but God could calmly stroll across it.

I don't think there is any rational explanation for this story apart from this - the gospel writers wish us to understand that Jesus was God incarnate and so has supernatural powers to do extraordinary things. Since the sea was a place of terror, it was normally regarded as an abode of ghosts or phantoms.

So, think of these disciples in their blessed boat. Tossed around on waves all night, apparently abandoned by their Master. They were sick as parrots and utterly exhausted, freezing cold and soaked to the skin, already extremely fearful and desperate for some miracle to save them.

When... hey presto... Oh no! It just got worse! Do you ever have those really bad days? The car has a flat tyre. The dog is sick. Someone complains about you at work. Your wife has an argument with you and you think it just can't get any worse when you check your mail and find an unexpected tax demand...

Well anyway, hey presto, things got worse for these guys in their little fishing boat! Can you imagine it?

*What's that over there James?*

*Aww, it's just a trick of the light!*

*But that trick of the light is heading our way.*

*Yeah it looks a bit like...*

*Well it looks a bit like a figure walking on the water... And its coming our way!*

*It's a ghost! It's the long lost spirit of pirate Nathan who wanders the seas on stormy nights looking for boats to drag down to the depths of hell itself! We're finished!*

And then, well then the ghost talks! In a creepy... well actually in a strangely familiar voice, it, he, cries out *"Take courage, it is I, don't be afraid."*

It is I was no mere *hi guys its me didn't you realise?*

*It is I* echoes the great *I AM* formula. It is I. It is Jesus. It is God. Walking on the water. Coming to save them! Don't be afraid.

Well when their teeth subsided from all the chattering, Jesus and Peter get down to chatting - this is Matthew's special bit of the story that Mark doesn't have. Peter has quickly recovered himself and.. Well what was he thinking.. He asks *Lord if it's you...* So there was still some doubt then... *If it's you, tell me to come to you on the water.*

What was wrong with Peter? Would you have said that to this figure who sounded like Jesus, probably was Jesus, but you weren't quite sure, at 4:30 in the morning on the sea of Galilee after a night battling the waves? You would?

Well maybe you would if it was Jesus called you. So... Jesus says, Come! Like he's saying come and sit by me while the barbecue is cooking... Not come and do something which is entirely, literally, utterly, physically impossible, i.e. strolling on liquid H<sub>2</sub>O.

So Peter - God love him - climbs over the side of the boat in the night and steps onto the dark sea! It had to be Peter, didn't it! Lovely, crazy, impulsive, passionate, act-first-think-later Peter...

And we know he's sure to sink like a rock - that was his name after all! He's only a man after all. But what's this? He does it! He starts walking on the water and making his way to Jesus! Fair play Peter!

And then comes the well-worn spiritual point. I probably don't need to make it, do I? Well just to make sure, I will. While ever Peter looks at Jesus, walking on the water works just fine... But if Peter looks at the wind... What's that? How can you look at the wind... Well Peter does - he looks at the wind and the waves and the storm and that, my friend, is when he starts to sink. Turn your eyes upon Jesus, and that's how to have faith in the storm.

To be honest it's reminiscent of one of those cartoons where roadrunner or someone walks off the top of a cliff in thin air above a canyon and does just fine until he realises what he's doing and looks at the drop and then - whoosh - he's doomed to fall pow to the ground as flat as a pancake.

Anyway, Peter's heart, and more to the point his whole body, sinking, he cries out to Jesus *save me!* Jesus gives him a hand and, back in the boat, asks the kind of question only Jesus can get away with asking under circumstances like these:

*You of little faith, why did you doubt?*

*Well there's this storm you see Jesus, and there's the fact that never before in history has anyone successfully walked on liquid water, and then Peter's just a regular working fisherman not some miracle working guru, and he's tired and impulsive to the point of being daft, and then there's the size of those waves and the strength of that wind... there's all those reasons why he might have let a teensy crumb of doubt slip into his mind...*

BUT it is Jesus to whom he talks. Against all the reasonable arguments in the world that a thing is impossible, well, put Jesus on the other side of the balance and suddenly, game on... The impossible just got distinctly possible, because Jesus showed up.

No wonder Matthew is keen to show who Jesus really is. These guys are not just amazed by Jesus' stunt on the sea, as Mark has it. They adore him. They worship him. They bow before him and call him the Son of God himself. They are awestruck!

\* \* \*

Are you thinking what I'm thinking? 2020 has been, as a year, well, we might say, not that great... A third of a million killed by a deadly virus; 42,000 of them in the UK. The dead dying separate from loved ones and buried in pared back ceremonies. People living alone for months on end. Fear rising. Jobs threatened. Unemployment growing. Student careers dealt a body-blow. Predictions of dire economic conditions yet to come. The possibility of future waves of the same virus.

We have left so much familiarity, so much that previously comforted us, behind. We enter a new kind of world, and it seems things will never be quite the same again.

But, put Jesus into the balance. See him walk across these perilous seas. He has not abandoned us. How can life be rebuilt after this terrible season of sickness, death and slump? It seems impossible, but Jesus is with us. The frightening circumstances we find ourselves in as a world, as a nation, as a city... are not the sign that God has abandoned us, but the very context into which Jesus walks in all his power and glory.

Those Israelites enslaved in Egypt had to step out and walk free on Passover night, into an unknown land. We as God's people at Hearsall are called to step out into a strange land and show how to love and serve and believe and hope though the seas may rage about us - because Jesus is with us.

The boat in Matthew's story might have been a symbol for the church in all its comfortable familiarity. Is it time to get out of the boat, to fix our eyes on Jesus, and walk the walk of faith into a strange new land? To find a strange new way of being church in this strange new land? To be in the vanguard of working out what life in all its fullness looks like in the perplexing, tempestuous realities of 2020?

May it be so. Amen.

### **Song Oceans (Where feet may fail)**

You call me out upon the waters  
The great unknown where feet may fail  
And there I find You in the mystery  
In oceans deep my faith will stand

And I will call upon Your Name  
And keep my eyes above the waves  
When oceans rise  
My soul will rest in Your embrace  
For I am Yours and You are mine

Your grace abounds in deepest waters  
Your sovereign hand will be my guide  
Where feet may fail and fear surrounds me  
You've never failed and You won't start now

So I will call upon Your Name  
And keep my eyes above the waves  
When oceans rise  
My soul will rest in Your embrace  
For I am Yours and You are mine

And You are mine

Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders  
Let me walk upon the waters  
Wherever You would call me  
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander  
And my faith will be made stronger  
In the presence of my Saviour

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I will call upon Your Name  
Keep my eyes above the waves  
My soul will rest in Your embrace  
I am Yours and You are mine

### Invitation to Communion

Stop a while! Sit down! Stay for the meal... Be you old or young, rich or poor, come and rest for a bit. Whether you know a great deal or not very much; whether you feel very confident or feel rather shy and uncertain, you are warmly invited. This is a meal for soul more than body.

Well there is one condition and it's this - you should know that you need love and mercy - from God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and from one another. A self-absorbed and utterly self-reliant person might not find much of interest here. So, are you staying? Good.

*Let's talk to Jesus about what we need.*

Lord Jesus, as we sit in your presence we know it's true - we've made some mistakes recently, and, to be honest, that habit of saying or doing the wrong thing is deeply ingrained. *So, take a moment now to mention any particular thing that's on your mind and get it out of the way.*

Lord Jesus, thank you that when you suffered and died on the cross, you proved your desire to forgive us and be kind to us. In our hearts and minds and bodies, we receive your forgiveness now.

### Bible verses

*Let's remember some of the precious things Jesus said:*

I am with you always till the end of the age.

Seek first God's kingdom and his right way of acting - and all these things you need will be given to you as well.

Let the small children come to me - for the Kingdom of heaven belongs to people like them.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.

### How the Lord's Supper came to be

Let's hear Matthew's version of how Jesus established this meal we are sharing today:

After sunset, Jesus and the Twelve were sitting around the table. During the meal, he said, "I have something hard but important to say to you: One of you is going to hand me over to the conspirators."

22 They were stunned, and then began to ask, one after another, "It isn't me, is it, Master?"

23-24 Jesus answered, "The one who hands me over is someone I eat with daily, one who passes me food at the table. In one sense the Son of Man is entering into a way of treachery well-marked by the Scriptures—no surprises here. In another sense that man who turns him in, turns traitor to the Son of Man—better never to have been born than do this!"

25 Then Judas, already turned traitor, said, "It isn't me, is it, Rabbi?"

Jesus said, "Don't play games with me, Judas."

26-29 During the meal, Jesus took and blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to his disciples:

Take, eat.

This is my body.

Taking the cup and thanking God, he gave it to them:

Drink this, all of you.

This is my blood,

God's new covenant poured out for many people  
for the forgiveness of sins.

"I'll not be drinking wine from this cup again until that new day when I'll drink with you in the kingdom of my Father."

30 They sang a hymn and went directly to Mount Olives

### Thanksgiving prayer

Well it's only good manners to say thank you. Let's pray again.

Lord Jesus, thank you for our food and drink; thank you especially for bread, wine and juice. As we look at these things now, we are so grateful for everyone who has made them and brought them into our house. Delivery drivers, bakers, shelf-stackers, farmers, pickers, wine-makers and many more. And we're so grateful for the fruitfulness of the earth you have made, for plants that grow giving food and drink for us all. But today we see some deeper meanings too. The wine or juice reminds us of your suffering. The bread, when its broken, reminds us of your broken body. And your welcome to this meal reminds us of the welcome of heaven, when all shall be well, and all kinds of people will sit and eat and drink together in happiness. So thank you Jesus for all these things, and especially that you died for us to bring us mercy, and rose again to give us everlasting life. Amen.

## Sharing

We are about to share bread and wine together in our various houses, so take a moment to remember those in other homes. Picture their faces. Pray a blessing on them. How many can you remember as we listen to this little song? Let there be love shared among us!

Let there be love shared among us  
Let there be love in our eyes  
May now Your love sweep this nation.  
Cause us oh Lord to arise  
Give us a fresh understanding  
Of brotherly love that is real,  
Let there be love shared among us,  
Let there be love

Let there be love shared among us  
Let there be love in our eyes  
May now Your love sweep this nation.  
Cause us oh Lord to arise  
Give us a fresh understanding  
Of sisterly love that is real,  
Let there be love shared among us,  
Let there be love

It's time to share the bread. Please take it in your hands and break it now as I say:

*Jesus said, this is my body which is for you. Do this in memory of me.*

So let's share the bread together, and think of all our brothers and sisters sharing bread in homes around Coventry and beyond.

So now we share the wine or juice. Lift it up as I say,

*Lord Jesus we drink from this cup which is the new covenant between you and humanity. We drink with glad and thankful hearts, for our sins are forgiven and you fill us once more with your Holy Spirit.*

Let's share the cup together.

After taking the bread and wine, we pray once more.

Thank you for inviting us to this meal. It's been wonderful to know your presence in our hearts as we have eaten and drunk together. It's been very special to think of our sisters and brothers, and to know that we all belong together, even if we can't meet in the church building. So help us, Lord, to live our lives aware of your presence with us. If we are facing a future which is in many ways uncertain, thank you that wherever we go and whatever situations we find ourselves in, you are with us, and we can know your love and share it with our fellow Christians and with all kinds of people. And so we decide to follow you into the coming week, confident of your everlasting loving-kindness. Amen.

We sing of that loving-kindness in our closing hymn, the King of love my shepherd is...

Hymn (BPW 394)

The King of Love my shepherd is,  
whose goodness fails me never;  
I nothing lack if I am his  
and he is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow  
to rest my soul he leads me,  
and where the rich green pastures grow,  
with heavenly food he feeds me.

Perverse and foolish when I strayed,  
each time in love he sought me,  
and on his shoulder gently laid,  
and home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill  
with you, dear Lord, beside me;  
your rod and staff my comfort still,  
your cross before to guide me.

You spread a table in my sight;  
your blessings grace bestowing;  
you bid me taste the sweet delight  
from your pure chalice flowing!

The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;  
the love of God;  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all  
now and always. Amen.

Sung blessing

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you  
wherever he may send you;  
may he guide you through the wilderness,  
protect you through the storm;  
may he bring you home rejoicing  
at the wonders he has shown you;  
may he bring you home rejoicing  
once again into our doors.