

2nd August, 2026

The paper-version Service



St Andrew's
Church



The Good
Shepherd
Four Marks
Responding to God's Love



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's Service.

Opening Prayer: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn:

I cannot tell why he, whom angels
worship, should set his love upon the
sons of men,
or why, as Shepherd, he should seek the
wanderers,
to bring them back, they know not how
or when.

But this I know, that he was born of
Mary when Beth'lem's manger was his
only home,
and that he lived at Nazareth and
laboured,
and so the Saviour, Saviour of the world,
is come.

I cannot tell how silently he suffered,
as with his peace he graced this place of
tears, or how his heart upon the cross
was broken,
the crown of pain to three and thirty
years.

But this I know, he heals the broken-
hearted and stays our sin and calms our
lurking fear
and lifts the burden from the heavy
laden;
for still the Saviour, Saviour of the world
is here.

I cannot tell how he will win the nations,
how he will claim his earthly heritage,
how satisfy the needs and aspirations
of east and west, of sinner and of sage.
But this I know, all flesh shall see his
glory,
and he shall reap the harvest he has
sown,
and some glad day his sun will shine in
splendour
when he the Saviour, Saviour of the
world, is known.

I cannot tell how all the lands shall
worship,
when at his bidding every storm is
stilled,
or who can say how great the jubilation
when every heart with love and joy is
filled.

But this I know, the skies will thrill with
rapture,
and myriad myriad human voices sing,
and earth to heav'n, and heav'n to
earth, will answer,
'at last the Saviour, Saviour of the world,
is King!

The Sermon by Timothy James

Read Psalm 105:1-38, Matthew 11:1-6 – Remember

Last week's psalm, Psalm 104, praised God for his work in creation. Psalms 105 and 106 turn our attention instead to God's work in human history, particularly in the history of his chosen people. They recount many of the same events but from very different perspectives: Psalm 105 celebrates God's faithfulness, Psalm 106 laments Israel's repeated unfaithfulness.

The key verse in Psalm 105 is verse 5: **“Remember the wonderful works he has done.”** Why is remembering so important?

The God of the Bible is not a distant idea or philosophical principle. He is the God who acts in history, at particular times, in particular places, with, for and through particular people. His saving work did not happen “long ago and far away” but at a specific geographic location and a specific, dateable moment. He called Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, remembered his covenant with them, and brought their descendants out of slavery in Egypt.

Throughout the Old Testament, the Exodus became the defining demonstration and proof of God's saving power and covenant faithfulness, and the pattern for God's future acts of salvation. It was also the foundation of Israel's moral obligations, and the standard by which the prophets judged the nation's gratitude and obedience. Again and again, God reminds his people, “I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt.” No other saving act is recalled so frequently.

In our Gospel reading, John the Baptist, imprisoned and uncertain, asks whether Jesus really is God's promised Messiah. Jesus points to what he is *doing*: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the poor hear good news. Just as the psalm points Israel to God's mighty deeds, Jesus points John to his own mighty works. God's identity is revealed through what he does in real time.

For Christians, the history of Israel is our history too. Without knowing the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who brought Israel out of Egypt, we

cannot fully understand the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who came into history to bring us out of bondage to sin. The Exodus is the great Old Testament picture of God's saving intervention; the cross is its fulfilment. As Paul reminds us, "These things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction" (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Remembering, however, is not merely an intellectual exercise. At the Lord's Supper we remember Christ not simply by thinking about him but by sharing bread and wine together. We remember through worship, prayer, obedience and service. In many ways, we become what we remember.

The psalm ends by saying that God gave his people the promised land "that they might keep his statutes and observe his laws." God's grace comes first; obedience follows. We do not obey because we fear punishment, but because we remember what God has done and respond with gratitude.

As we reflect on this psalm, it is worth asking ourselves two questions. First, what has God done for you that you should never forget? Secondly, what response of thankful obedience is he calling you to this week? Jesus summed up God's law as loving God with all our heart and loving our neighbour as ourselves. Remembering God's faithfulness should always lead us to love him more deeply and to serve those around us more generously.

9th Sunday after Trinity: Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church: open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer: *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as 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.*

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, St Andrews and The Good Shepherd, the communities around us and our whole nation. 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV).

At the Church of the Good Shepherd:

- Tea and Chat and Bowls: August 19th at 2pm in Church Hall & Church.
- Coffee and Questions: August 26th at 10.30am in Church Hall.
- The Community Cupboard, 2:45pm every Thursday in Church.

For Further information:

This paper and all parish details are on the website at
<https://www.parishofmedsteadandfourmarks.co.uk>