

28th April, 2024

The paper-version Service



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.**

Song:

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away.
Change and decay in all around I see.
O thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour.
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like thyself my guide and strength can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless,
ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes.
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heaven's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee;
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

Read 1 John 4: 7-21 and John 15:1-8

The Sermon was by the Archdeacon of Winchester Diocese, Rev. Richard Brand, and is available on YouTube. Here is a very brief view of his sermon:

As human beings we have this deep need to belong somewhere, to have somewhere we can call home, a place where we belong that gives us stability, security and love.

In our readings there is one word that appears 13 times: abide.

When we get to the resurrection, Mary in the Garden by the empty tomb is asked by Jesus: "Who are you looking for?" The earlier "What are you looking for?" is answered by a "Who are you looking for?"

Jesus is telling us that the answer to all that we seek in life is to be found in a relationship with him, that Jesus abides with us and stays with us whatever happens in life.

In 1847, Rev Henry Lyte wrote the hymn "Abide with me"; he had tuberculosis and he knew that his end was near.

By abiding with Jesus, remaining with Jesus, we learn more and more what love looks like and what this extraordinary love is in a relationship with God.

Fifth Sunday of Easter: Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by

your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen 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: May 15th at 2pm in the Church Hall.
- Tea and Bowls: May 15th at 2pm in the Church.
- Coffee and Questions: May 22nd at 10.30am in the Church Hall.

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