

The readings for today the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter are Acts ch2 vv 42-end, Psalm 23 and John 10 vv 1-10.

One of my favourite walks during this time of isolation has involved walking along the edge of a field full of sheep. At first the flock was obviously full of very pregnant ewes, enjoying the peace and warmth of the wonderful weather and the peace and quiet of the much reduced road traffic. Then they were gone! An empty field where there used to be gentle activity. My walk had lost its high point.

Then a different noise from the field could be heard, a different sight was to be seen and a feeling of joy was felt deep inside me. The ewes had given birth to one, two and even three lambs, each bleating, each numbered, each wagging their tails with excitement as they found their mother and were fed, each settling to sleep in the shade of the trees.

So I came to prepare this piece for us and discovered that Psalm 23 was the Psalm for the day. A psalm written approximately 3000 years ago, that still holds for us that encouragement, certainty and healing that we are all so much in need of in these uncertain times. Written as a song and how we love to sing these words, in the many ways that we do.

David was a shepherd and he knew how to lead and care for the herd he was responsible for and he shares his belief that God, himself, is like a Good Shepherd, protecting and caring for us as His flock.

David even seeing himself as a sheep, totally reliant on the Shepherd for food, shelter and safety; setting times for rest and quiet, avoiding the difficult pathways, but being with him in his times of danger. And there is the promise of celebration when we all can be together again. God keeps his promises to us.

And lastly let's not forget the sheep dogs that help to round us up and keep us together. They have names found in verse 6. They are called " Goodness and Mercy"

May you feel God with you as you read or sing this psalm for yourself.  
Continue to trust in Him and be blessed.