

Dear Friends,

It's hard now to believe that we began these online services and CDs more than three years ago, on Passion Sunday 2020. I'm away this Sunday so, for today's service, I am reissuing one of those very early services. At that stage, Sam was still living in Fronnant, and we recorded the service there every week. These days, I still use the hymns we recorded in those earlier years but, because Sam's moved away, you don't hear his voice in the spoken parts of the liturgy. In those early days of lockdown, I also tried to find something each week which we called *A Look on the Bright Side*. We stopped that, not because times got much better, but because I ran out of what I thought were really funny suitable poems. Today, you will hear again one of my favourite poems by the wonderful Les Barker: *The Shipping forecast*. There may be one or two anachronisms in the service, but those can be quite fun, as we remember time past. Finally, because of the lambing theme, we used for this one-off service two pieces performed by my dear friends, the *New English Orchestra and Singers: Behold the Lamb of God* from *Messiah* and an *Agnus Dei* composed by the late and much-lamented Director of the NEO, Nigel Swinford. I hope you enjoy this service of *Thanksgiving for the Lambing*.

Matthew.

Thanksgiving for the Lambing.

Introit.

Behold the Lamb of God. from *Messiah* by G.F. Handel.

Welcome and Introduction.

Hymn. Morning has Broken.

**Morning has broken, like the first morning;
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird.
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning:
Praise for them springing fresh from the word.**

**Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven,
Like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass.**

**Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning,
Born of the one light Eden saw play.
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day.**

Confession and Absolution.

Collect for the Third Sunday of Easter.

Epistle Reading 1 Peter 1.17-23.

Gospel Reading Luke 24.13-35.

This is the Gospel of the Lord:

Praise be to you, O Christ.

Song **Purify my heart: let me be as gold and precious silver;
Purify my heart: let me be as gold, pure gold.
Refiner's fire, my heart's one desire
Is to be holy; set apart for You, Lord.
I choose to be holy; set apart for You, my Master, ready to do Your will.**

**Purify my heart: cleanse me from within and make me holy.
Purify my heart: cleanse me from my sin, deep within.
Refiner's fire, my heart's one desire
Is to be holy; set apart for You, Lord.
I choose to be holy; set apart for You, my Master, ready to do Your will.**

Address.

Song **Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares can destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.**

**Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord at the noon of the day.**

**Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.**

**Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.**

Blessings.

On the bright side: The Shipping Forecast, by Les Barker.

Extroit *Agnus Dei* Swinford

Behold the Lamb and *Agnus Dei* were performed by the New English Orchestra and Singers.

The Shipping Forecast is by Les Barker.

Les's many wonderful works are available at: <http://shop.mrsackroyd.com/cd.html>