

## Growing Vocations: Vocations Sunday 26 April 2026

### A Service of the Word

#### Preparation

Grace, mercy and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ  
be with you  
**and also with you.**

This is the day that the Lord has made.  
**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Blessed are you, Sovereign God,  
to you be praise and glory for ever!  
From the rising of the sun to its setting  
your name is proclaimed in all the world.  
You gave Christ as a light to the nations,  
and through the anointing of his Spirit  
you established us as a royal priesthood.  
As you call us into his marvellous light,  
may our lives bear witness to his truth  
and our lips never cease to proclaim your praise,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
**Blessed be God for ever.**

*Hymn or song*

## Prayers of Penitence

God has called us to follow Christ,  
and has formed us into a royal priesthood, a holy nation,  
to declare the wonderful deeds of him who has called us  
out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Let us confess the times when we have failed to heed this call.

Lord Jesus, you said to your disciples:  
'You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.'  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, we know that the harvest is plentiful  
but the labourers are few.  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you appointed us to go and bear fruit that will last.  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

May the Father of all mercies  
cleanse *you* from *your* sins,  
and restore *you* in his image  
to the praise and glory of his name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## Collect

Let us pray for the ministry of the whole people of God.  
*Silence is kept.*

God our Father, Lord of all the world,  
through your Son you have called us into the fellowship  
of your universal Church:  
hear our prayer for your faithful people  
that in their vocation and ministry  
each may be an instrument of your love,  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

*Gloria in Excelsis or Hymn/Song*

## **The Liturgy of the Word**

### **First Reading - Acts 2:42-end**

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

*At the end the reader may say*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm - Psalm 23**

Refrain: I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

1 The Lord is my shepherd; ♦  
therefore can I lack nothing.  
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures ♦  
and leads me beside still waters. **R**

3 He shall refresh my soul ♦  
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.  
4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil; ♦  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me. **R**

5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; ♦  
you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.  
6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, ♦  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Refrain: I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

*Hymn or song*

### **Second Reading – 1 Peter 2.19-end**

For it is to your credit if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, where is the credit in that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

‘He committed no sin,  
and no deceit was found in his mouth.’

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

*At the end the reader may say*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Gospel Reading – John 10.1-10**

‘Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The

gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.' Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Sermon

### Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith  
in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Christ died for our sins  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he was buried;  
he was raised to life on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures;**

**afterwards he appeared to his followers,  
and to all the apostles:  
this we have received,  
and this we believe.**

**Amen.**

### Prayers of Intercession

Lord God and Father of all,

over all and in all and through all:  
we give thanks that we are called to your service;  
may all your people may be attentive and obedient to your calling.

Lord, hear your people  
**and answer our prayers.**

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be apostles, sent out to do your work.

We pray for all who respond to this calling to serve in your name:  
for those immersed in the world, seeking to bear witness to the gospel in word and action,  
for those whose service takes them to places where they face opposition and difficulty,  
may they be continually filled with your Spirit, and empowered to follow your calling.

Lord, hear your people  
**and answer our prayers.**

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be prophets.  
We pray for all whom you have called to speak out and proclaim the values of your kingdom:

for those who challenge injustice and apathy and untruth,  
for those who campaign for the well-being of your people and your world  
may they be continually filled with your vision, and have courage in their prophetic calling.

Lord, hear your people  
**and answer our prayers.**

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be evangelists.  
We pray for all whom you have called to share the message of your love:  
for those who communicate the good news of Christ to others from a variety of backgrounds,  
for those whose enthusiasm and love conveys your truth,  
may they be filled with your love as they share the good news with others.

Lord, hear your people  
**and answer our prayers.**

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be pastors.

We pray for all whom you have called to care for others through prayer and through service:

for those who take care of any who are young or old, who are sick or struggling,

for those whose work supports medical, social and community services, may their lives be channels of your love and grace.

Lord, hear your people

**and answer our prayers.**

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be teachers.

We pray for all whom you have called to encourage adults and children to learn and grow:

for those who teach informally as parents, mentors and facilitators,

for workers in schools, colleges and universities, and for those who teach in our churches

may they speak your truth, and help others to grow in wisdom.

Lord, hear your people

**and answer our prayers.**

Lord of all,

you have called each of us to serve you

in your world and in your Church;

strengthen and equip us by your Spirit

to recognise your call to us,

and give us grace and courage to fulfil that calling.,

through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

**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 for ever.**

**Amen.**

*Hymn or Song*

## Conclusion

Christ, you call us.

**Help us respond to your call.**

Christ, you call us to be your people in the world.

We will follow your call to be our people:

our hands will do your work,

our feet will walk your way.

Christ, you call us.

**Help us respond to your call.**

Christ, you call each one to be your child for the world.

may our hearts search for your truth,

may our souls listen for your voice,

may our lives follow in your path.

Christ, you call each one of us.

**Help us respond to your call.**

Christ, you call us to be your people in the world.

**We are the body of Christ.**

## Blessing

May the boldness of the Spirit transform you,  
may the gentleness of the Spirit lead you,  
may the gifts of the Spirit equip you  
to serve and worship God;

and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.**