



The Parish of Darfield

All Saints Darfield and St Michael Great Houghton

Sunday 26th April 2026

Fourth Sunday of Easter

10:45 a.m. Holy Communion Darfield

Sunday 3rd May 2026

Fifth Sunday of Easter

9:00 a.m. Holy Communion Great Houghton

10:45 a.m. Morning Worship Darfield

The Gateway to Life...

Sheep are the first animals to be mentioned in the Bible where Abel, one of the sons of Adam and Eve, is described as *a keeper of sheep*. [Genesis 4: 2, RSV] In due time Abel brought an offering of the fat portions of the first-born from his flock, At that time the LORD looked with favour on Abel rather than on his brother Cain who, as one who worked the soil, brought just some of the fruits of the soil. This resentment led to Cain killing Abel. Today's Old Testament reading in Genesis 7 tells of Noah's enormous task set by the Lord to preserve the lives of his family and representatives of all living creatures. amongst these was the group of animals described as clean which would have included sheep.

Moses spent many years as a shepherd tending the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro and it was during this time that Moses encountered the LORD in the '*burning bush*' and was commissioned to lead the Israelites out of Egypt towards the land promised year earlier to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Towards the end of his life, Moses was seeking guidance from the LORD to appoint a leader who would lead the Israelites so that they as the Lord's people would not be like "*sheep without a shepherd*" [Numbers 27: 17]. The future King David was the youngest son of Jesse and had the task of protecting his father's flocks from predatory lions and bears. David used these experiences to persuade King Saul to let him go out and eventually defeat the Philistine Champion Goliath. In later years as King, David wrote many psalms which are recorded in the Book of Psalms. Seventy three of the one hundred and fifty psalms have a direct reference to being a psalm of David. If you were to be asked to quote the opening words of any of the Psalms, how would you respond? Would it be "*O come let us sing unto the Lord*" [95] or "*O be Joyful in the Lord, all ye lands*" [100] or "*God be merciful to us and bless us*" [67]. I doubt it. It's more likely to be "*The Lord is my Shepherd*" from Psalm 23. This psalm continues with "*therefore can I lack nothing*" and ends with "*I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever*". You will also know those great words of comfort in "*Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me*".

The theme of the lost sheep is picked up by several of the Prophets including Isaiah in the words "*We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*" [Isaiah 53: 6] Ezekiel was given a specific charge by the Lord to speak to the "*Shepherds of Israel*", the leaders of the day, asking them why they didn't "*feed the flock*" and why they had not cared for the flock attempting to lead them by cruelty [Ezekiel 34: 1-31]

We mustn't forget that the Shepherds who "*watched their flocks by night*" were the first to be told of the birth of Jesus and had the privilege of visiting the stable and glorifying and praising God for who they had seen [Luke 2: 8-20]

Jesus often used the imagery of sheep and shepherds in His parables and teachings. The Disciples were urged to beware of false prophets who are described as wolves in sheep's clothing. They appear to be doing good but will be dangerous, malicious, or treacherous.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep describes a shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine sheep to find and rescue and return the lost sheep to the flock. [Luke 15: 3-7]. Jesus described himself as the Good Shepherd who would lay down His life for His sheep. Jesus also described Himself as the Gate through which whoever enters will be saved.

That is the Gateway to life!

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father.

Readings

Genesis 7:
Acts 2: 42-47
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2: 19-25
John 10: 1-10

Readings for this week

April

26th Hebrews 4: 1-7
27th Hebrews 4: 8-16
28th Hebrews 5:
29th Joshua 21: 1-19
30th Joshua 21: 20-45

May

1st Joshua 22: 1-17
2nd Joshua 22: 18-34
3rd Joshua 23:

Community Shop on the Go and Warm-Space

Next Community Shop: Thursday 30th April

Warm Space: Every Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

BOOK THE DATE: Saturday 6th June - All Saints Garden Party
How can YOU contribute to the success of this event?

Thoughtful Thursday at Great Houghton

Thursdays between 11:00 a.m. and noon.

Craft and Natter is back Tuesday 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Parochial Church Council Membership 2026-2027

Following the Annual Meetings on Sunday 19th April 2026

Churchwarden: Peter Robinson

Reader: John McMillan

Deanery Synod: Kay Valentine

All Saints: Pete Cook Jo Darlison
Carol Hunter Janet Lowrie
Sheila McMillan David Mills
Aubrey Venables Margaret Venables
Karen Walton

St Michael's: Karen-Julie Lunn Lee Pywell
Linda Williams

Prayer Square

**This week we are
praying for residents of
Darfield**

Mulberry Close
The Willows
Willow Court
Beech Court
Larch Close
Honeysuckle Close

Prayer:

Forward any prayer requests to our
Prayer Ministry team through

Carol Hunter: 07542 527 331

The Passover Lamb

Moses had received clear instructions from the Lord to lead the Israelites out of their oppression in Egypt. The people were told to select a year old lamb without blemish and on the particular day to slaughter the lamb and smear its blood on the doorposts of their houses. The meat was to be roasted and eaten once they were ready to move. The Blood of the Passover Lamb would indicate to the Lord that the lamb would act as a substitute and that the families in the house would be spared from the final plague inflicted on the Egyptians, that of the death of the first-born sons.

From our Christian perspective, we can identify Jesus as the *Lamb of God* or the *Paschal Lamb* whose sacrifice was made once and for all. He gave up his life at Passover as the ultimate and permanent atonement to renew our broken relationships with God. The blood of Jesus saves us from spiritual death without the need for further animal sacrifice.

Resources and Contacts

Churchwarden
PCC Secretary

Peter Robinson
Karen Walton

01226 753 572

Safeguarding

Contact Peter Robinson
07910 728 581

Our Web Site

<http://www.darfieldallsaintschurch.org.uk/>

Email Allsaintschurchdarfield@gmail.com

Facebook [@darfieldallsaints](https://www.facebook.com/@darfieldallsaints)



Find us on A Church Near You

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/>

Search your current location or Postcode

DEADLINE for Content

Items, preferably via e-mail, to

pdrobinson@live.co.uk

Tuesday 5:00 p.m.

All Saints



St Michael



All Saints PCC Darfield is a Registered Charity (no. 1185316).