

**St Andrew's and St George's West Church
Order of Service
24 May 2020
7th Sunday of Easter**



Preparing for Worship

Thus says the LORD: Stand at the crossroads and look
and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies;
and walk in it and find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

Introit

I hear the voice of God
Calling to me every day,
I hear the voice of God
Calling every day.
Music: Stuart M. Mitchell

Welcome and Call to Worship

Sisters and Brothers,
we are one.
Wherever we are in this city, nation, and world
we are one.
With gratitude,
trusting in the One
who holds our world and our lives securely.
we join together in worship.

Hymn 436: Christ triumphant, ever reigning

Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!*

Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
Power and majesty concealing
By your humble birth:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!*

Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
victim crucified!
Death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!*

Priestly king, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!
Sin and death and hell shall never
stifle hymns of love:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!*

So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,
ceaselessly upon you gazing,
this shall be our song:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!*

Words: Michael Saward (b. 1932)
Tune: Guiting Power

Opening Prayer and the Lord's Prayer with choral response (adapted from Spill the Beans)

Choral Response: Lord have mercy

Eternal God, there is none before you, none above you,
and this morning we are glad to take our place
alongside those who right now, on earth and in heaven,

are raising their voices to praise you.

God of Easter joy and Ascension glory,
our days are filled with strangeness,
our world is filled with hurt,
our hearts are filled with anxiety.
Help us cast our inward unrest upon you,
help us rest our anxiety in your love.

Choral Response: Christ have mercy.

Lord, when our thoughts become too tightly focussed
may they be widened to embrace new ways and opportunities.
When our science has yet to find answers,
or the story seems too difficult to grasp,
may our souls still know your peace.

Choral Response: Lord have mercy.

God of unity and infinite variety, we give thanks
that through you, we can all be as one.
Remind us that the strength of your abiding love is beyond
measure, no matter what.
Help us to see that any love of infinite power,
will never overcome the power of your infinite love.

We give you our thanks for so much, especially that you came down to us,
and will, according to your loving promise and purpose,
sustain and lift us back up to you.

And, may our spirits be lifted now, as we pray together the prayer Jesus taught:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen**

He was a Story Teller

by Ruth Burgess

New Testament Reading John 17:1-11(NRSV)

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ²since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵So now,

Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

Anthem: There's a wideness in God's mercy,

There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in his justice,
which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven;
there is no place where earth's failings
have such kindly judgement given.

For the love of God is broader
than the measure of man's mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
But we make his love too narrow
by false limits of our own;
and we magnify his strictness
with a zeal he will not own.

There is plentiful redemption
in the blood that has been shed;
there is joy for all the members
in the sorrows of the Head.
There is grace enough for thousands
of new worlds as great as this;
there is room for fresh creations
in that upper home of bliss.

If our love were but more simple,
we should take him at his word;
and our lives would be all gladness
in the joy of Christ our Lord.

Words: Frederick William Faber (1814-1863)

Music: Maurice Bevan (1921-2006)

Reflection



Hymn 782 Lord of life, we come to you

Lord of life, we come to you.
Lord of all, our Saviour be,
come to bless and to heal
with the light of your love.

Through the days of doubt and toil,
in our joy and in our pain,
guide our steps in your way,
make us one in your love.

Words: Catherine Walker (b. 1958)

Tune: Eriskay Love Lilt

Prayers of Intercession

Lord of Life, we come to you with our prayers for others.

Storytelling God, you know our stories better than we know them ourselves. You know how many of us have stories which we feel we can share only with you.

Bring to the surface the stories of others that we need to listen to and act upon:

The stories of those grieving lives cut short;

The stories of those who are unwell, mentally or physically;

The stories of those who feel abandoned and left behind;

The stories of those exhausted by long shifts caring for others;

The stories of those who feel they have failed someone they cared for;

The stories of those who cannot forget difficult situations at work;

Those who feel that their story has become impossible to tell;

Those who feel too guilty to tell their story;

Those who feel they are not allowed to tell their own story and those who have no-one to speak to about their lives;

Those who have achieved much and need encouragement to speak about their achievements.

May we begin to tell new stories:

of how we have got better at actively listening to the stories of others;

of how our lives can be enriched by sharing our stories with others;

of how the lost can be found if we open up more to their stories;

of how we can rebuild on your firm foundation of justice and equality;

of the worth to be found in stories about searching and finding.

God of Discovery, help us find the strength to discover what needs to be brought to light and what needs to be changed. Help us to be better listeners, to show more willingness to listen to the stories of others and to share our own with them. May such sharing help build your kingdom on earth.

We give thanks to Jesus, the Living Word, the Living Story of your great drama of salvation among us, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Flute music: Fil-Flawwa ta' Mejju (*In the Sweetness of May*)

Maltese hymn

Benediction

As you journey into the rest of this day know that Jesus prays for you and for your protection: Hear these words of blessing.

May God, the Creator, guide your footsteps,
May God, the Redeemer, lead you on your journey,
May God, the Sustainer, companion you,
this day and evermore. Amen.

Sung Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you

The Lord bless you and keep you
The Lord make his face to shine upon you
And be gracious unto you
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
And give you peace.

Minister: Rosie Magee

Director of Music: Brigitte Harris

Opening Prayer: Pat Mckerrow

Monologue: David Dow

Prayers of Intercession: Selda Dow

Vocal ensemble: Eleanor Cozens, Eleanor Wilson, Caitlin McGillivray, Drew Crichton, Tim Cooper and Andrew Carvel

Flautists: Laura Cioffi and Clara Galea

Communications: Alison Bruce and Susan McLarty

Service produced by Andrew Carvel

The reading, 'He was a Storyteller', by Ruth Burgess, is taken from *Acorns and Archangels* Wild Goose Publications 2009 (p80)

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