

**St Andrew's and St George's West
Order of Service, September 27, 2020**

The River of Life



Welcome

Call to Worship

God, who makes us with the earth
God, who gives us to the world
God, God-with-us in our struggles
Let us join together in coming to God in worship.

Hymn 36 God is our refuge and our strength

God is our refuge and our strength,
in straits a present aid;
therefore, although the earth remove,
we will not be afraid:

Though hills amidst the seas be cast;
though waters roaring make,
and troubled be; yea, though the hills
by swelling seas do shake.

A river is, whose streams make glad
the city of our God;
the holy place, wherein the Lord
most high hath his abode.

God in the midst of her doth dwell;
nothing shall her remove:
the Lord to her an helper will,
and that right early, prove.

Psalm 46, verses 1-5
The Scottish Psalter, 1929

Opening Prayer based on a prayer by David Coleman

Tread lightly, says God, who having made the world, still dreams of justice glimpsed and yet to come.

Loving God, you give the world to us and you give us to the world, to serve the good of all.

We come near to you today in the times of great difficulty and suffering for so many people, so much greater than ours.

We struggle to put our trust in you for you seem far away.

We struggle to believe that you really know our world as it is now, that you understand all the complications and modern pressures of our lives.

Loving God, you give the world to us and you give us to the world, to serve the good of all.

Help us to trust you when you say,

“Come to me as a swim in the autumn sea, for I will carry, uphold and refresh you, even when you are out of your depth,

even when you have neglected my world,

when you have chosen to be selfish,

when you have not seen how your actions trample on life.

There is beauty yet; and Christ’s forgiveness,

hope, and steps to take just now, before day’s end.”

Loving God, you give the world to us and you give us to the world, to serve the good of all.

Yes, there are songs to sing on journeys travelling lightly, for we tread on dreams of God.

Let us pray together the prayer that people say in countries the world over:

Our Father in heaven.

Hallowed be your name

Your kingdom come,

Your will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

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.

River Sunday

Sharing the Peace: Hymn 798 The peace of the earth be with you

The peace of the earth be with you,
The peace of the heavens, too;
The peace of the rivers be with you,
The peace of the oceans, too.
Deep peace falling over you
God's peace growing in you.

New Testament Reading: Revelation 22: 1-5, 16-17

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever...

"It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come."
And let everyone who hears say, "Come."
And let everyone who is thirsty come.
Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift.

Hymn 706 For the healing of the Nations (verses 1-3)

For the healing of the nations,
Lord, we pray with one accord,
for a just and equal sharing
of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us forward into freedom,
from despair your world release,
that, redeemed from war and hatred,
all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness
fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living,
let it from the earth be banned:
pride of status, race or schooling,
dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice
may we hallow life's brief span.

Reflection on Water Justice

Including video clip of Ruth Valerio in conversation with Archbishop Thabo Makgoba,
Archbishop of Cape Town

Anthem Down to the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray
studying about that good ol' way
and who shall wear the starry crown.
Good Lord, show me the way.
Oh, sisters, let's go down,
let's go down, come on down,
down in the river to pray.

Words: Traditional

Music: arr. Philip Lawson

Prayers of the People

Dear Lord of all, we try to find the words to say to you what you know already.

We pray for your world and your people.

We look at our life today with its cross-currents, its eddies and its waterfalls. We stand on the bank and are afraid to go near the water, let alone throw ourselves in. And so we pray for others and ourselves.

We pray for refugees and migrants made even more desperate by dreadful living conditions, by the destruction of their inadequate homes, by dangerous sea journeys, and being locked into agreements with criminal traffickers. We pray that our government and others will reach out to take in destitute people, lone and orphaned children, and will share the responsibility among us rich countries of Europe.

We pray for the amazingly brave women and men of Belarus, putting their freedom, and their lives and their families at risk for democracy.

We feel such sympathy for, and we pray for, the energetic, idealistic and lively children and young people who are so keen to start on the next step of their lives - whether at secondary school, university, college or in their first job - and whose lives have been put on hold by Covid. Help us and our governments to work towards allowing them their goals and their adventures.

We pray for those who are experiencing hardship, loneliness and worry. We pray for people who have been made redundant, who see no prospect of work or meaning in their lives, who even if they have work, are terribly lonely and isolated working from home. Stand beside them and let them feel your presence.

We do not need all the "stuff" that we have, which ties us down, and distracts us from our true goals. We pray for grace to share, to give money and time, to forget ourselves and to see you in everyone we meet.

We stand on the bank of the river, sometimes afraid to launch ourselves into life and all its confusion. But we keep afloat by moving forward. You are beside us, as you were with Peter; you, our example, our friend and our Saviour. And so we pray in your name. Amen.

Hymn 706 For the healing of the Nations (verse 4)

You, Creator God, have written

your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness
bring the life of Christ to mind;
that by our response and service
earth its destiny may find.

Words: Fred Kaan (b.1929)

Blessing and Sending

Refreshed with the living water,
encouraged by the witness of generations,
let us go from this place
with anticipation and zeal,
ready for the work
God would have us do.
Go into the world knowing that
God the Creator calls us to live in balance with our sisters and brothers,
God the Sustainer will bring us to streams of living water,
God the Renewer restores us in Christ's image for the sake of the world. 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
Leaders: Alison Campbell - River Sunday, prayers of the people; Dorothy Tarrant - reading
Opening prayer: Mary Margaret Scott
Director of Music: Brigitte Harris
The Choir of St Andrew's and St George's West
Vocal ensemble: Eleanor Cozens, Eleanor Wilson, Caitlin McGillivray, Drew Crichton, Tim
Cooper, Andrew Carvel
Communications: Alison Bruce and Susan McLarty
Service produced by Andrew Carvel

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