

**St Andrew's and St George's West**  
**Order of Service**  
**28 January 2024 10:30**



Conversion of Saint Paul by Fr Lawrence Lew OP via Flickr  
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**Welcome and announcements**

**Call to Worship**    Matthew 12:18-21, CEV

(Leader:)            Here is my chosen servant! I love him, and he pleases me.  
I will give him my Spirit, and he will bring justice to the nations.

(All:)                **He won't shout or yell or call out in the streets.**  
**He won't break off a bent reed or put out a dying flame,**  
**but he will make sure that justice is done.**  
**All nations will place their hope in him.**

**Hymn 66 (Psalm 102)**    Lord, hear my prayer!            *Tune: Londonderry Air (CH4 729)*  
verses 1, 3, 4, 6 only

**Prayer finishing with Lord's prayer**

**Intro to first reading**

**Reading**            Habakkuk 3:1-19 (NRSVA)

**3** A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk according to Shigionoth.

**2** O Lord, I have heard of your renown,  
and I stand in awe, O Lord, of your work.

In our own time revive it;  
in our own time make it known;  
in wrath may you remember mercy.

3 God came from Teman,  
the Holy One from Mount Paran. *Selah*

His glory covered the heavens,  
and the earth was full of his praise.

4 The brightness was like the sun;  
rays came forth from his hand,  
where his power lay hidden.

5 Before him went pestilence,  
and plague followed close behind.

6 He stopped and shook the earth;  
he looked and made the nations tremble.

The eternal mountains were shattered;  
along his ancient pathways  
the everlasting hills sank low.

7 I saw the tents of Cushan under affliction;  
the tent-curtains of the land of Midian trembled.

8 Was your wrath against the rivers, O Lord?

Or your anger against the rivers,  
or your rage against the sea,  
when you drove your horses,  
your chariots to victory?

9 You brandished your naked bow,  
sated were the arrows at your command. *Selah*  
You split the earth with rivers.

10 The mountains saw you, and writhed;  
a torrent of water swept by;  
the deep gave forth its voice.

The sun raised high its hands;  
11 the moon stood still in its exalted place,  
at the light of your arrows speeding by,  
at the gleam of your flashing spear.

12 In fury you trod the earth,  
in anger you trampled nations.

13 You came forth to save your people,  
to save your anointed.

You crushed the head of the wicked house,  
laying it bare from foundation to roof. *Selah*

14 You pierced with their own arrows the head of his warriors,  
who came like a whirlwind to scatter us,  
gloating as if ready to devour the poor who were in hiding.

15 You trampled the sea with your horses,  
churning the mighty waters.

16 I hear, and I tremble within;  
my lips quiver at the sound.

Rottenness enters into my bones,  
and my steps tremble beneath me.

I wait quietly for the day of calamity  
to come upon the people who attack us.

17 Though the fig tree does not blossom,  
and no fruit is on the vines;  
though the produce of the olive fails  
and the fields yield no food;  
though the flock is cut off from the fold  
and there is no herd in the stalls,  
18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord;  
I will exult in the God of my salvation.  
19 God, the Lord, is my strength;  
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer,  
and makes me tread upon the heights.

To the leader: with stringed instruments.

### **Sharing the peace**

Jesus said "... in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble..." John  
16:33 (NIV)

Let us now greet one another with a sign of peace

### **Dedication of offering**

**Hymn 469**            Restore, O Lord, the honour of your name!     *Tune: Restore, O Lord*

### **Intro to second reading**

**Reading**            Acts 26 vv1-32 (NRSVA)

26 Agrippa said to Paul, 'You have permission to speak for yourself.' Then Paul stretched out his hand and began to defend himself:

2 'I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am to make my defence today against all the accusations of the Jews, 3 because you are especially familiar with all the customs and controversies of the Jews; therefore I beg of you to listen to me patiently.

4 'All the Jews know my way of life from my youth, a life spent from the beginning among my own people and in Jerusalem. 5 They have known for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I have belonged to the strictest sect of our religion and lived as a Pharisee. 6 And now I stand here on trial on account of my hope in the promise made by God to our ancestors, 7 a promise that our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship day and night. It is for this hope, your Excellency, that I am accused by Jews! 8 Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?

9 'Indeed, I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 And that is what I did in Jerusalem; with authority received from the chief priests, I not only locked up many of the saints in prison, but I also cast my vote against them when they were being condemned to death. 11 By punishing them often in all the synagogues I tried to force them to blaspheme; and since I was so furiously enraged at them, I pursued them even to foreign cities.

12 'With this in mind, I was travelling to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, 13 when at midday along the road, your Excellency. I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and my companions. 14 When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It hurts you to kick against the goads." 15 I asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. 17 I will rescue you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

19 'After that, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance. 21 For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22 To this day I have had help from God, and so I stand here, testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place: 23 that the Messiah must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.'

24 While he was making this defence, Festus exclaimed, 'You are out of your mind, Paul! Too much learning is driving you insane!' 25 But Paul said, 'I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking the sober truth. 26 Indeed the king knows about these things, and to him I speak freely; for I am certain that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this was not done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.' 28 Agrippa said to Paul, 'Are you so quickly persuading me to become a Christian?' 29 Paul replied, 'Whether quickly or not, I pray to God that not only you but also all who are listening to me today might become such as I am—except for these chains.'

30 Then the king got up, and with him the governor and Bernice and those who had been seated with them; 31 and as they were leaving, they said to one another, 'This man is doing nothing to deserve death or imprisonment.' 32 Agrippa said to Festus, 'This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to the emperor.'

### **Responses to the second reading**

**Hymn 243**                      Touch the earth lightly                      *Tune: Tenderness*

**Sermon**                      "A way of life consistent with the light of Jesus"

**Hymn 537**                      We do not hope to ease our minds                      *Tune: Mary Morison*

### **Prayers of the People**

**Hymn 642**                      Ye that know the Lord is gracious                      *Tune: Abbot's Leigh*

### **Benediction**

**Worship leader:** Brian Drummond

**Organist:** David Stewart

**Reader:** Mary Scott

**Prayers of the people:** Dorothy and Alastair Mackenzie

Cover image: *12th-century mosaic fragment of St Paul's conversion from the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem.*

**St Andrew's & St George's West Church of Scotland Edinburgh**

**Charity SC008990**

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