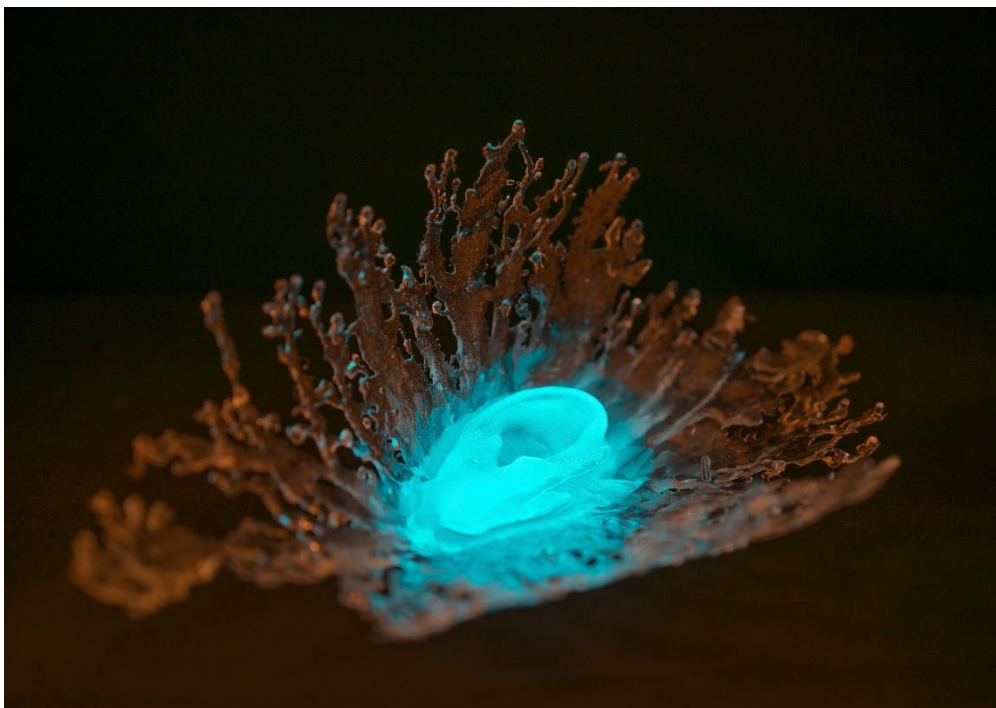


St Andrew's and St George's West

Order of Service, 7 February 2021

Listening to Fragility



Piano Music

Preparing for Worship

'The strongest love is the love that can demonstrate its fragility.' Paulo Coelho

Welcome and Call to Worship

Let us rid ourselves of all the clutter,
removing the symbols
that stand between each of us
and the holy.

Let us take away those things
we prefer to speak to,
like some holy middle person,
rather than directly to Godself.
And may we find faith enough
to listen
to leave ourselves
raw,
exposed,
fragile,
pared,
ready before God,
as we really are,

and find God
before us,
as God really is.

Come to the quiet centre
where God is waiting and listening.

Candle is lit

Hymn 716 Come and find the quiet centre

Come and find the quiet centre
in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter,
find the space where we are freed:
clear the chaos and the clutter,
clear our eyes, that we can see
all the things that really matter,
be at peace, and simply be.

Silence is a friend who claims us,
cools the heat and slows the pace;
God it is who speaks and names us,
knows our being, touches base,
making space within our thinking,
lifting shades to show the sun,
raising courage when we're shrinking,
finding scope for faith begun.

In the Spirit let us travel,
open to each other's pain;
let our lives and fears unravel,
celebrate the space we gain:
there's a place for deepest dreaming,
there's a time for hearts to care;
in the Spirit's lively scheming
there is always room to spare!

Words: Shirley Erena Murray (1931-2020)
Tune: Lewis Folk Melody

Opening Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Living and faithful God,
the one in whom we live and move and have our being,
bless us, one and all, as we wait on you this day.
Increase within us.
Through your Spirit,
may our hymns and prayers,
our hearing of the Scriptures,
our listening,
our searching thoughts,
fuel our longing for closeness

and a deeper commitment to you.

As we enter the second year of living with this pandemic
the scale of change to our everyday still has the power to dizzy us
and to disorientate us.

Centre us.

We know we have shared losses
and gained new ways of being together.
We are learning that touch takes many forms
and that 'virtual' is still 'real'
when we share your blessings.

Forgive us

when we hold on
for fear of reaching out
for something new,
frightened of failure,
fearful of falling.

Catch us

and free us
by your grace
freely extended to all.

Open us

to find ever new ways to love and serve you as we
love and serve your fragile world.
For we know that you are with us in both the losing and the finding.
You are with us in our shared fragility
whatever form it takes.
Bind us together as you bind what ails us.
May we find wholeness in the midst of fragility
as we listen to each other.
For in doing so we are listening to you.

Unite us as we say together the prayer that 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 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.**

The Listening Post

Scripture Readings:

Psalm 147:1-11 (NRSV)

Praise the LORD!
How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.
The LORD builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the outcasts of Israel.
He heals the broken-hearted,
and binds up their wounds.
He determines the number of the stars;
he gives to all of them their names.
Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;
his understanding is beyond measure.
The LORD lifts up the downtrodden;
he casts the wicked to the ground.

Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre.
He covers the heavens with clouds,
prepares rain for the earth,
makes grass grow on the hills.
He gives to the animals their food,
and to the young ravens when they cry.
His delight is not in the strength of the horse,
nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;
but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him,
in those who hope in his steadfast love.

Mark 1: 29-39 (NRSV)

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, 'Everyone is searching for you.' He answered, 'Let us go on to the neighbouring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.' And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Hymn 259 Beauty for Brokenness

Beauty for brokenness,
hope for despair,
Lord, in the suffering
this is our prayer.
Bread for the children,
justice, joy, peace,
sunrise to sunset
your kingdom increase.

Shelter for fragile lives,
cures for their ills,
work for the craftsmen,
trade for their skills.
Land for the dispossessed,
rights for the weak,
voices to plead the cause
of those who can't speak.

God of the poor,
friend of the weak,
give us compassion, we pray,
melt our cold hearts,
let tears fall like rain.
Come, change our love
from a spark to a flame.

Refuge from cruel wars,
havens from fear,
cities for sanctuary,
freedoms to share.
Peace to the killing fields,
scorched earth to green,
Christ for the bitterness,
his cross for the pain.

Rest for the ravaged earth,
oceans and streams,
plundered and poisoned,
our future, our dreams.
Lord, end our madness,
carelessness, greed ;
make us content with
the things that we need.

God of the poor,
friend of the weak,
give us compassion, we pray,
melt our cold hearts,
let tears fall like rain.
Come, change our love
from a spark to a flame.

Lighten our darkness,
breathe on this flame,
until your justice
burns brightly again ;
until the nations
learn of your ways,
seek your salvation
and bring you their praise.

God of the poor,
friend of the weak,
give us compassion, we pray,
melt our cold hearts,
let tears fall like rain.
Come, change our love
from a spark to a flame.

Graham Kendrick (*b.* 1950)

Reflection Listening to Fragility

Hymn 727 In the bulb there is a flower (vv1-2)

In the bulb there is a flower;
in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise:
butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter
there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence,
seeking word and melody.
There's a dawn in every darkness,
bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future,
what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

Words: Natalie Allyn Wakeley Sleeth (1930-1992)
Tune: Hymn of Promise

Prayers for Others

Loving God, we come before you now to pray for our neighbours in need.

We know that you hear and are present with the persecuted, the oppressed, victims of hate, violence and war, those struggling against corruption and abuse of power, especially just now in Russia and Myanmar.
Help us to hear what you hear so that we may better know how we should act as your hands of justice in the world.

In silence we bring all these our neighbours before you in love, both those known to us and only to you.

Silence

We know that you hear and are present with those suffering mentally or physically, the sick, the dying, the bereaved, especially at present people affected by the Covid pandemic, those who do not have access to the care they need, who struggle to get fair access to vaccines, those who have lost their jobs, children and young people whose futures and wellbeing have been affected.

Help us to hear what you hear so that we may better know how we should act as your hands of healing in the world.

In silence we hold these our neighbours before you in love, both those known to us and only to you.

Silence

We know that you hear and are present in the wind in the reeds and the trees, the water dancing and tumbling over the stones in the river, the waves on the shore, the songs of the birds and the whales, the myriad sounds your creatures make, the music of the spheres, the heartbeat of life throughout all creation.

Help us to hear what you hear so that we may better know how to act as your cherishing hands in the care of the world and the creatures in it.

In silence we hold all our neighbours in creation in love before you.

Silence

We say together:

We ask that you will flow your loving balm like gold through the cracks in minds, bodies, spirits and all the broken places of the world. Help us partner you in bringing strength out of fragility, in bringing justice, healing and cherishing to our neighbours who are our brothers and sisters; beauty for brokenness, hope for despair. Amen

Hymn 727 In the bulb there is a flower (v3)

In our end is our beginning;
in our time, infinity;
in our doubt, there is believing;
in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection;
at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

Words: Natalie Allyn Wakeley Sleeth (1930-1992)
Tune: Hymn of Promise

Blessing

May you find grace
in the moments you need it most.
May renewal bind itself around you
and lead you on.
May you hear the Word speak your name
into every silence.
And may God fill you
with the possibilities
you bring to the world.

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
abide with you this day and always. Amen.

Sung Blessing 786

May the God of peace go with us
as we travel from this place;
may the love of Jesus keep us
firm in hope and full of grace.

Words: Ian Jamieson (b. 1939)
Music: Scottish traditional melody

Organ Music

Farewell to Stromness (1980)

Peter Maxwell Davies

Minister and Leaders: Rosie Magee, Bridget Harris, Urzula Glienecke

Scripture Reading: Alison Hay

Video: 'The Listening Post' Andy Gregg, Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland

Director of Music: Brigitte Harris

Vocal ensemble: Frances Cooper, Eleanor Cozens, Eleanor Wilson, Drew Crichton,
Andrew Carvel

Pianists: Drew Crichton, Eleanor Cozens

Technical team: Alison Bruce, Andrew Carvel, Susan McLarty, Mary Margaret Scott

Digital Coordinator: Andrew Carvel

Sources:

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