

## St Andrew's and St George's West

Order of Service 25 April 2021

### Widening the Circle



#### Music

You are before me, God, you are behind,  
and over me you have spread out your hand;  
such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too high to grasp, too great to understand.

Words from Psalm 139

Music: Alfred Morton Smith (1879-1971)

#### Welcome and Call to Worship

All things bright and beautiful,

**God created.**

All things sad or difficult,

**God holds.**

Neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies,

**God loves.**

We gather as a community to worship God,

to be reminded of God's goodness,

to be reminded of the call to be a part of that goodness.

Come, let us worship the God of all.

#### Hymn

I to the hills

I to the hills will lift mine eyes.

From whence doth come mine aid?

My safety cometh from the Lord,  
who heaven and earth hath made.

Thy foot he'll not let slide, nor will  
he slumber that thee keeps.  
Behold, he that keeps Israel,  
he slumbers not, nor sleeps.

The Lord thee keeps, the Lord thy shade  
on thy right hand doth stay:  
the moon by night thee shall not smite,  
nor yet the sun by day.

The Lord shall keep thy soul; he shall  
preserve thee from all ill.  
Henceforth thy going out and in  
God keep for ever will.

### **Opening Prayer**

Gracious God,  
you call us each by name.  
You listen when we tell you our hopes and our fears.  
You love us no matter what happens.  
You care for us more than we can ever know.  
Thank you for being in our lives, for guiding us and leading us.  
Thank you for putting people in our lives who love us.  
Thank you for showing us how to love, and be loved.  
Thank you for showing us how to care for all people and your creation.  
Forgive us when we act as if your love is just for us, rather than for everyone.  
Help us to hear your voice as it calls out to us to be  
more forgiving, more generous, more kind.  
Guide us towards a better world where we can all live in safety and peace together.  
Amen.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**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.**

### **Sharing of the Peace**

### **Leading or Following?**

## **New Testament Reading** John 10:11-18

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

## **Anthem** Sicut cervus

Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum,  
ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks:  
so my soul longeth for thee, O God.

Words: Psalm 42:1

Music: G. P. da Palestrina (1524-94)

## **Reflection**

### **Hymn** Break not the circle of enabling love (verses 1,2)

Break not the circle of enabling love,  
where people grow, forgiven and forgiving;  
break not that circle — make it wider still,  
till it includes, embraces all the living.

Come, wonder at the love that comes to life,  
where words of freedom are with humour spoken  
and people keep no score of wrong and guilt,  
but will that human bonds remain unbroken.

## **Prayers of the People**

Loving God,  
you are the origin of the circle of life.

We are your people. We try in our erratic and wandering way to be your special people. But we are not your only special people – here in our church, in the Church of Scotland, in Scotland. We know that other nations and other religions also think that they are your special people, and we struggle to accept this, that we might all be special to you. A child has to believe he is special with a special bond with her or his parents, and as we grow, we learn to share that. Sometimes we struggle to share, to include and to welcome others in. Help us understand that it is not our circle but yours.

God of expansive love

**may the circle be made wider on earth as it is in heaven.**

Where people are excluded through means of our making, bring recognition and restoration. Help us walk in the shoes of those who suffer the indignity and violence of discrimination for whatever reason. Thank you for hopeful signs of justice, where those in positions of power are held accountable for their actions.

God of expansive love

**may the circle be made wider on earth as it is in heaven.**

Thank you for signs of hope at this time – for the blue of bluebells and kingfishers, the red of robins and tulips, the green of germinating seeds. We pray for those whose environment has been stripped of beauty or of colour. Where there is drabness may we be part of bringing your vibrancy and fullness of life.

God of expansive love

**may the circle be made wider on earth as it is in heaven.**

Thank you for the prospect of reunions and reconnecting. Thank you for examples of duty, of burdens joyfully shouldered to help make that possible. We give thanks for those we know and love who have gone away from us and are reunited with you.

In a moment of silence, we now bring before you places or people where the circle of love feels fractured or distant...

God of expansive love

**may the circle be made wider on earth as it is in heaven.**

We ask all in the name of The Good Shepherd who leads us in the circle of life, giving the Life of God both now and throughout eternity. Amen

**Hymn** Break not the circle of enabling love (verses 3,4)

Sing high! Give thanks for all who came and come  
to teach the world the craft of hopeful craving  
for peace and wholeness that will fill the earth ;  
for faith that stirs us to creative living.

Join then the movement of the love that frees,  
till people of whatever race or nation  
will truly be themselves, stand on their feet,  
see eye to eye with laughter and elation.

**Blessing**

May the God who created a world of diversity and vibrancy  
go with us as we embrace life in all its fullness.

May the God who shows us how to care for all we meet,  
as well as those we will never meet in *this* life,  
go with us as we try to be worldwide neighbours.

May the God who breaks down barriers and widens the circle  
go with us as we find the courage to create a place of welcome for all.

**Organ Music**      Fantasia in C BWV 570

J.S. Bach

Worship Leaders: Rosie Magee, Alison Campbell

Opening prayer: Ruby Brown

Scripture Reader: Morag Keith

Director of Music: Brigitte Harris

The Choir of St Andrew's and St George's West

Vocal ensemble: Caitlin McGillivray, Eleanor Wilson, Drew Crichton, Andrew Carvel

Pianist: Drew Crichton

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

Digital Coordinator: Andrew Carvel

Sources:

Photo Credit: Pixabay

Opening Prayer Spill the Beans issue 38 ©2021 Spill the Beans Resource Team  
( adapted)

Scripture reading taken from the New Revised Standard Version

All hymns from Church Hymnary 4th edition

Hymns used under licence from CCLI 247862

Streaming licence 351013

and ONE LICENSE #A-734408

St Andrew's & St George's West Church of Scotland Edinburgh. Charity SC008990

[www.stagw.org.uk](http://www.stagw.org.uk)