

**St Andrew's and St George's West  
Order of Service, 27 March 2022**

**Expansive Mothering**



**Gathering music** *Prière à Notre Dame* (Hymn to Our Lady)

Léon Boëllmann

**Welcome**

**A calling to mind**

**Hymn** Psalm 139

- 1 O God, you search me and you know me.  
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.  
When I walk or lie down you are before me:  
ever the maker and keeper of my days.
- 2 You know my resting and my rising.  
You discern my purpose from afar,

and with love everlasting you besiege me :  
in every moment of life or death, you are.

- 3 Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,  
you have known its meaning through and through.  
You are with me beyond my understanding :  
God of my present, my past and future, too.
- 5 For you created me and shaped me,  
gave me life within my mother's womb.  
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you :  
safe in your hands, all creation is made new.

## **A midwife reflects**

### **Prayer of adoration and confession and Lord's Prayer**

Creator God, your extravagant love draws us here.  
It draws us into life.  
It is your grace that gives birth to faith  
It is your grace that gives birth to infinite forms of love.

May the time we spend here, together, in your presence  
bring honour to you and equip us in your service.  
Help us each day to stand with, and for, the diverse unity of the Body of Christ.

Nurturing God, as we welcome Spring  
we know that you dwell in every living thing.  
You breathe the first breath into new borns and  
bring to fulness of life all that is growing and ripening.

We are sorry when we do not turn to you and, instead, turn in on ourselves.  
We are sorry that we do not always call out to you and confess all that concerns us  
and weighs us down.  
We turn to you now, confident of your expansive mercy and saving strength.  
Unburden us. Unbear us.

(silence)

As community, help us dwell in your forgiveness, through Christ.

Look with love and mercy on all the very mixed emotions that can run through this  
day. Hallow our memories and enable us to be at peace.

Hear us now as we are bold to pray the prayer that Jesus taught saying:

**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.**

## **Introduction to Scripture reading**

### **Scripture Reading**

**Exodus 2:1-10**

International Children's Bible

There was a man from the family of Levi. He married a woman who was also from the family of Levi. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She saw how wonderful the baby was, and she hid him for three months. But after three months, she was not able to hide the baby any longer. So, she got a basket made of reeds and covered it with tar so that it would float. She put the baby in the basket. Then she put the basket among the tall grass at the edge of the Nile River. The baby's sister stood a short distance away. She wanted to see what would happen to him.

Then the daughter of the king of Egypt came to the river. She was going to take a bath. Her servant girls were walking beside the river. She saw the basket in the tall grass. So she sent her slave girl to get it. The king's daughter opened the basket and saw the baby boy. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. She said, "This is one of the Hebrew babies."

Then the baby's sister asked the king's daughter, "Would you like me to find a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby for you?"

The king's daughter said, "Yes, please." So the girl went and got the baby's own mother. The king's daughter said to the woman, "Take this baby and nurse him for me. I will pay you." So the woman took her baby and nursed him. After the child had grown older, the woman took him to the king's daughter. She adopted the baby as her own son. The king's daughter named him Moses, because she had pulled him out of the water.

**Anthem**      There's a wideness in God's mercy

Maurice Bevan

**Prayer of dedication**

A prayer of St Ignatius

**Take, Lord and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding,  
and my entire will. All I own and all I have, you gave to me, and to you, Lord, I  
return it. Everything is yours, dispose of it according to your will.**

**Give me only your love and grace, this is enough for me. Amen**

### **Sharing the Peace of Christ**

'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called children of God'.

We meet in the name of Christ and share his peace.  
May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

**Hymn** Paraphrase 11

- 1 How happy are all they who hear  
true Wisdom's guiding voice ;  
and who her understanding make  
their early, only choice.
- 2 For she has treasures greater far  
than east or west unfold ;  
and her rewards more precious are  
than all their stores of gold.
- 3 In her right hand she holds to view  
a length of happy days ;  
and riches with great honours joined  
are what her left displays.
- 5 According as her labours rise,  
so her rewards increase ;  
her ways are ways of pleasantness,  
and all her paths are peace.

**Reflection** Women, mothers and mothering

**Hymn** There is a line of women

1. There is a line of women  
extending back to Eve  
whose role is shaping history  
God only could conceive;  
and though through endless ages  
their witness was repressed,  
God valued and encouraged them  
Through whom the world was blessed.

So sing a song of Sarah –  
to laughter she gave birth;  
and sing a song of Tamar  
who stood for women's worth;  
and sing a song of Hannah  
who bargained with her Lord;  
and sing a song of Mary  
Who bore and bred God's Word.

3. There is a line of women  
who stood by Jesus' side,  
who housed him while he ministered  
and held him when he died;  
and though they claimed he'd risen,  
their news was deemed suspect  
till Jesus stood among them,  
his womanly elect.

So sing a song of Anna  
who saw Christ's infant face;  
and sing a song of Martha  
who gave him food and space;  
and sing of all the Marys  
who needed his requests,  
and now, at heaven's banquet,  
are Jesus' fondest guests.

### **Prayers of the People**

Lord in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer**

### **Hymn**

- 1 'I have a dream', a man once said,  
'where all is perfect peace ;  
where men and women, black and white,  
stand hand in hand, and all unite  
in freedom and in love.'
- 2 But in this world of bitter strife  
the dream can often fade ;  
reality seems dark as night,  
we catch but glimpses of the light  
Christ sheds on humankind.
- 4 So dream the dreams and sing the songs,  
but never be content ;  
for thoughts and words don't ease the pain :  
unless there's action, all is vain ;  
faith proves itself in deeds.
- 5 Lord, give us vision, make us strong,  
help us to do your will ;  
don't let us rest until we see  
your love throughout humanity  
uniting us in peace.

### **Sending and blessing**

We go out as a reflection of the many ways that God loves and nurtures us.  
We go out as midwives of God's expansive love in and for the world.

And may God, who gave birth to all creation, bless you:  
May God, who became incarnate by an earthly mother, bless you:  
May God, who broods as a mother over her children, bless you.  
This day and evermore

### **Response: Threefold Amen**

**Sending music**

Lasst uns erfreuen

Rebecca Groom te Velde

Worship Leaders: Rosie Magee, Ruth Sheard, Diana Thurston-Smith  
Organist/pianist: Jamie Turnbull  
Technical team: Alison Bruce, Susan McLarty, Mary Margaret Scott,  
Phillipa Burgess, Amy Marcham

Sources:

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Scripture reading(s) taken from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise  
stated.

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