

**St Andrew's and St George's West
Order of Service, 29 May 2022
Hearing a silent voice**



Gathering music

Welcome

Call to worship

We come together to share silence as well as words. We do this because God is as present in silence as in speech...

Jesus, you commanded waves to be still and calmed a stormy sea.

Quieten now our restless hearts that they might find rest in you.

We recognise the noise inside of us and the noises around us.

We acknowledge them, but we seek here to know your presence in the midst of all that might distract us.

So, now we surrender for these moments our speech, knowing that beneath the silence is a deeper Word, and that when we say nothing, you are still listening.

(Silence)

Ever listening

ever watchful,

ever loving God,

We come to worship you

Hymn 716 Come and find the quiet centre

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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 !

Opening prayer and 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.**

Active Listening

Sharing the Peace of Christ

Dedication of offerings

Hymn 133 Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud

- 1 Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud,
Fortress, Fountain, Shelter, Light,
Judge, Defender, Mercy, Might,
Life whose life all life endowed :
 *May the Church at prayer recall
 that no single holy name
 but the truth that feeds them all
 is the God whom we proclaim.*
- 2 Word and Wisdom, Root and Vine,
Shepherd, Saviour, Servant, Lamb,
Well and Water, Bread and Wine,
Way who leads us to I AM :
- 3 Storm and Stillness, Breath and Dove,
Thunder, Tempest, Whirlwind, Fire,
Comfort, Counsellor, Presence, Love,
Energies that never tire :

Scripture Reading based on 1 Kings 19:1-4 (5-7) 8-15a.

Elijah the prophet was well known for obeying God. And, as a prophet, he made it his job to tell others how God wanted them to live. Like other prophets, Elijah sometimes had to tell people in power that they had strayed away from doing what God wanted. That never made the prophets popular in the eyes of those in charge, and Elijah was no exception.

Queen Jezebel was very angry with what Elijah had been saying and vowed that she would not rest until she killed him. Elijah got word of this and ran away.

After a day's journey into the desert, Elijah came to rest under the shade of a broom tree. Elijah did not like being on the run, and said to God, "I might as well give up; I have no future."

I wonder if you have had days like that?

While he was lying there feeling sorry for himself, Elijah fell asleep and had a dream. He heard a voice say, "Get up and eat and drink." When he awoke, he saw bread and a jar of fresh, cool water.

It didn't take too much convincing for Elijah to eat the bread and drink the water because he was very hungry. He ate and drank, and lay down again.

Then the angel of the Lord came again and touched him and said, "Get up and eat some more, you have a long journey ahead of you."

Elijah got up, ate and drank his fill, and then set out. He travelled for a long time – many days and nights – and he ended up at Mt. Horeb, a special mountain where the Hebrew people believed God lived. Elijah went into a cave to spend the night.

During the night, while he was asleep, Elijah felt God calling to him.

"What are you doing here, Elijah?" God asked.

"I've been doing just what I thought you wanted me to do," Elijah said. "I have tried to be a good prophet. The people have done some terrible things, and I have challenged them and told them they needed to change their ways. But what do I get for it? No one will have anything to do with me – that is, except those who want to kill me."

"Go stand on the mountain," God said, and so Elijah did.

A huge wind came – a wind so great it sent rocks tumbling down the hill. Elijah thought God might be in the wind, but Elijah did not find God in the wind.

After the wind, Elijah felt an earthquake. Elijah thought for sure God would be in the earthquake, but Elijah did not find God in the earthquake.

After the earthquake, there was a fire.

"God must be in the fire," Elijah thought. But Elijah did not find God in the fire.

Then everything calmed down. There was not a sound. Elijah listened and heard absolute nothingness. And in the midst of that, Elijah heard God's voice again.

"What are you doing here, Elijah?" God asked again.

"I've been doing just what I thought you wanted," Elijah said, "but all I have got for it is people who want to kill me. I'm all alone."

God didn't answer Elijah directly. God simply said,

"Go, Elijah. Continue on."

Elijah was not sure what lay ahead of him, but somehow he knew that God would be with him and that somehow things would work out. So he got up and headed down the mountain.

Reflection

Hymn Come, living God, when least expected

- 1 Come, living God, when least expected,
when minds are dull and hearts are cold,
through sharpening word and warm affection
revealing truths as yet untold.
- 2 Break from the tomb in which we hide you
to speak again in startling ways ;
break through the words in which we bind you
to resurrect our lifeless praise.
- 3 Come now, as once you came to Moses
within the bush alive with flame ;
or to Elijah on the mountain,
by silence pressing home your claim.
- 5 Then, through our gloom, your Son will meet us
as vivid truth and living Lord,
exploding doubt and disillusion
to scatter hope and joy abroad.
- 6 Then we will share his radiant brightness
and, blazing through the dread of night,
illuminate by love and reason,
for those in darkness, faith's delight.

Prayer of thanksgiving and intercession

We give thanks for everyone in the church
who works tirelessly, and often in confidence, to keep others safe;
we pray for all children and vulnerable adults who engage with our mission:
may they know Your love and protection.

We give thanks for the shelter and protection of our homes;
we pray for all people who are homeless, for whatever reason,
including refugees and victims of trafficking:
may they know Your love and protection.

We give thanks for the relative peace and security we enjoy:
we pray for all places of war and violence,
whether the aggressor be in the home or another nation:
may Your peace be known in our time.

We give thanks for all the bits of our life that bring us joy and contentment;
we pray for the broken-hearted, bereaved, and lonely,
and for all who have lost faith or purpose in life:
may Your peace be known in their hearts.

Silence

Healing God,

in amongst our shouts and songs of thanksgiving,
may we hear Your still whisper in the midst of pain and suffering,
and may we respond with courageous tenderness
to the needs around us,
as we follow the example of Christ Jesus, our teacher and Lord. Amen.

Hymn 588 Praise the Spirit in creation

- 1 Praise the Spirit in creation,
breath of God, life's origin :
Spirit, moving on the waters,
forming order deep within,
source of breath for all things breathing,
life in whom all lives begin.
- 2 Praise the Spirit, close companion
of our inmost thoughts and ways ;
who, in showing us God's wonders,
moves our hearts to love and praise ;
and God's will, to those who listen,
by a still small voice conveys.
- 3 Praise the Spirit, who enlightened
priests and prophets with the word ;
hidden truth behind the wisdoms
which as yet know not their Lord ;
by whose love and power in Jesus
God himself is seen and heard.
- 4 Praise the Spirit, sent by Jesus
when ascended to his throne,
who pours out on men and women
power for turning upside down
all the world and every people
as the gospel is made known.
- 5 Pray we now, Lord, Holy Spirit,
on our lives descend in might ;
let your flame burn bright within us,
fire our hearts and clear our sight,
till, consumed with your compassion,
we too set the world alight.

Sending and blessing

Sending music

Worship Leaders: Alison Hay, Rev Rosie Magee, Amy, Oscar and Toby Marcham

Pianist: Jamie Turnbull

Technical team: Alison Bruce, Susan McLarty, Mary Margaret Scott, Ruth Forrester,
Phillipa Burgess, Amy Marcham

Sources:

Image: Oscar Marcham

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