



Where all find a welcome and are nurtured in their journey with Christ.

Choral Evensong: 2 May 2021

Sunday 2 May 2021 at 6.00 pm



“Timeless words for changing times”

What is Evensong?

Evensong is a combination of two of the seven offices (services) that made up the daily round of monastic prayer. These were the evening offices of Vespers and Compline which consisted of responses, psalms, canticles, readings and prayers. The liturgy of Evensong was first written down in 1549 in Archbishop Thomas Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer*. Several revisions to the book were made over subsequent years with the definitive version published in 1662. Widely known for the beauty and richness of its language, including Myles Coverdale's translation of the psalms, the 1662 edition of the *Book of Common Prayer* remains the official prayer book of the Church of England.

The service of Evensong is renowned for its choral music. Several sections of the liturgy are sung by the choir though there are various ways in which everyone can participate. For example, it is an ancient custom in the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc Dimittis* as the choir sings the first two lines of the *Gloria* ('Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost') to make the sign of the cross and to bow one's head in honour of God the Holy Trinity.

Ever since its foundation this church has been a house of prayer. The first recorded priest of St Mary's Whitkirk was Paulinus who was the priest here in AD 1185. The worship we share today gives a powerful sense of connecting the present with the past and of being part of a great, and continuing, tradition. Thank you for being part of this act of worship this evening as we join our prayers and praises with those that have been offered here at St

Mary's for over eight hundred years.

The Service of Choral Evensong

Hymn

Please stand.

The Lord is ris'n indeed:
now is his work performed;
now is the mighty captive freed,
and death's strong castle stormed.

The Lord is ris'n indeed:
then hell has lost his prey;
with him is ris'n the ransomed seed
to reign in endless day.

The Lord is ris'n indeed:
he lives, to die no more;
he lives, the sinner's cause to plead,
whose curse and shame he bore.

The Lord is ris'n indeed:
attending angels, hear!
up to the courts of heav'n with speed
the joyful tidings bear.

Then take your golden lyres
and strike each cheerful chord;
join, all ye bright celestial choirs,
to sing our risen Lord.

Words: Thomas Kelly (1769-1855)

Music: melody from Johannes Leisentritt's

'Catholicum Hymnologium Germanicum' Cologne (1584)

adapted by William Henry Havergal (1793-1870)

Sentences of the Scriptures

Please remain standing.

Dearly beloved brethren,
the scripture moveth us in sundry places
to acknowledge and confess
our manifold sins and wickedness;
and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them
before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father;
but confess them with an humble,
lowly, penitent, and obedient heart;
to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same,
by his infinite goodness and mercy.
And although we ought at all times

humbly to acknowledge our sins before God;
yet ought we most chiefly so to do,
when we assemble and meet together
to render thanks for the great benefits
that we have received at his hands,
to set forth his most worthy praise,
to hear his most holy Word,
and to ask those things
which are requisite and necessary,
as well for the body as the soul.
Wherefore I pray and beseech you,
as many as are here present,
to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice
unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me:

General Confession

Please sit.

Almighty and most merciful Father,
We have erred and strayed
from thy ways like lost sheep,
We have followed too much
the devices and desires of our own hearts,
We have offended against thy holy laws,
We have left undone those things
which we ought to have done,
And we have done those things
which we ought not to have done,

**And there is no health in us:
But thou, O Lord,
have mercy upon us miserable offenders;
Spare thou them, O God,
which confess their faults
Restore thou them that are penitent,
According to thy promises
declared unto mankind
in Christ Jesu our Lord:
And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
That we may hereafter
live a godly, righteous, and sober life,
To the glory of thy holy Name.
Amen.**

The Absolution

Said by the Priest.

Almighty God,
the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who desireth not the death of a sinner,
but rather that he may turn
from his wickedness and live;
and hath given power
and commandment to his Ministers,
to declare and pronounce
to his people, being penitent,

the Absolution and Remission of their sins:
He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent
and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.
Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us
true repentance and his Holy Spirit,
that those things may please him
which we do at this present,
and that the rest of our life hereafter
may be pure and holy;
so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Opening Responses (or ‘Preces’)

‘Preces’ is Latin for ‘Prayers’. These opening sentences are sung alternately by the cantor and the choir.

O Lord, open thou our lips.

And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Please stand.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost;

**As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen.**

Praise ye the Lord.

The Lord's Name be praised.

The Psalmody

Please remain standing.

The psalms are sacred poems from the Old Testament dating back over three thousand years. The music for the psalm is known as Anglican chant, a short repeating tune.

Psalm 96

O sing unto the Lord a new song:
sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth.
Sing unto the Lord, and praise his Name:
be telling of his salvation from day to day.
Declare his honour unto the heathen:
and his wonders unto all people.
For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised:
he is more to be feared than all gods.
As for all the gods of the heathen, they are but idols:
but it is the Lord that made the heavens.
Glory and worship are before him:
power and honour are in his sanctuary.
Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people:
ascribe unto the Lord worship and power.

Ascribe unto the Lord the honour due unto his Name:
bring presents, and come into his courts.
O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness:
let the whole earth stand in awe of him.
Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is King:
and that it is he who hath made the round world so fast
that it cannot be moved;
and how that he shall judge the people righteously.
Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad:
let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is.
Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it:
then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord.
For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth:
and with righteousness to judge the world,
and the people with his truth.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
World without end. Amen.

Music: George Mursell Garrett (1834-1897)

Old Testament Lesson

Please sit.

At the end the reader says:

Here endeth the First Lesson.

Magnificat

Please stand.

The Magnificat is the song of praise Mary sang after learning that she would give birth to Jesus, as recounted in Luke (1.46).

My soul doth magnify the Lord:
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded:
the lowliness of his hand-maiden.
For behold, from henceforth:
all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me:
and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him:
throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm:
he hath scattered the proud
in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat:
and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things:
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy
hath holpen his servant Israel:
as he promised to our forefathers
Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
World without end. Amen.

Music: Samuel Wesley (1766-1837)

New Testament Lesson

Please sit.

At the end the reader says:

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

Nunc Dimittis

Please stand.

The Nunc Dimittis is also known as the Song of Simeon. Luke's gospel (2.29) tells us that old Simeon, a devout Jew, had been promised that he would not die until he had seen the promised Saviour. When Jesus was presented to him at the temple in Jerusalem, he at once recognised the Messiah and uttered these words of farewell.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace:
according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation;
Which thou hast prepared:
before the face of all people;
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles:
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:

World without end. Amen.

Music: George Alexander MacFarren (1813-1887)

The Apostles' Creed

Please remain standing.

**I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth:
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead, and buried:
He descended into hell;
The third day he rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand
of God the Father Almighty;
From thence he shall come to judge
the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost;
The holy Catholick Church;
The Communion of Saints;
The Forgiveness of sins;
The Resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting.
Amen.**

The Lesser Litany

These prayers bind together themes of praise, mercy and the desire for God's protection as night draws in. The first of the three prayers (or collects) change each

month based on the particular season of the Christian year.

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Please sit.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father,

**which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.**

The Responses

○ Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

And grant us thy salvation.

○ Lord, save the Queen.

And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.

And make thy chosen people joyful.

○ Lord, save thy people.

And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

**Because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, O God.**

O God, make clean our hearts within us.

And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The Collect of the Day

O Almighty God,
who alone canst order the unruly wills
and affections of sinful men:
Grant unto thy people,
that they may love the thing which thou commandest,
and desire that which thou dost promise;
that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world,
our hearts may surely there be fixed,
where true joys are to be found;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Collect for Peace

O God, from whom all holy desires,
all good counsels, and all just works do proceed:
Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give;
that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments,
and also that by thee we being defended

from the fear of our enemies
may pass our time in rest and quietness;
through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen.

The Collect for Aid against all Perils

Lighten our darkness,
we beseech thee, O Lord;
and by thy great mercy defend us
from all perils and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The Anthem

Please remain seated.

O sweet and blessed country, O Paradise of joy,
eternal fount of radiance no evil can destroy!
They stand those halls of Sion, all jubilant with song,
and bright with many an angel and all the martyr throng:
and there the throne of David, and there, from care released,
the song of them that triumph, the shout of them that feast!

The Prince is ever with them, the daylight is serene,
the pastures of the blessed are decked in glorious sheen.
What ecstasy of music within those courts is found!
What glorious alleluias supernal choirs resound!
Their psalms in holy chorus seraphic voices raise,
and cherubim make answer in antiphons of praise.
O home of fadeless splendour, of radiancy unpriced:
O sweet and blessed country, thy cornerstone is Christ.

Words: John Mason Neale (1818-1866) and Harrison Oxley (1933-2009)
from Bernard of Cluny (12th century)
Music: Gustav Holst (1874-1934) arr. Harrison Oxley (1933-2009)

The Sermon

Hymn

Please stand.

Blest Creator of the light,
making day with radiance bright,
thou didst o'er the forming earth
give the golden light its birth.

Thou didst mark the night from day
with the dawn's first piercing ray;
darkness now is drawing nigh;
listen to our humble cry.

May we ne'er by guilt depressed
lose the way to endless rest;
nor with idle thoughts and vain
bind our souls to earth again.

Rather may we heav'nward rise
where eternal treasure lies;
purified by grace within,
hating ev'ry deed of sin.

Holy Father, hear our cry
through thy Son our Lord most high,
whom our thankful hearts adore
with the Spirit evermore.

*Words: 'Lucis Creator Optime' translation unknown
Music: Justin Heinrich Knecht (1752-1817)*

The Prayers

Please sit.

Hymn

Please stand.

The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended:
the darkness falls at thy behest;
to thee our morning hymns ascended,
thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

We thank thee that thy Church unsleeping,
while earth rolls onward into light,
through all the world her watch is keeping,
and rests not now by day or night.

As o'er each continent and island
the dawn leads on another day,
the voice of prayer is never silent,
nor dies the strain of praise away.

The sun that bids us rest is waking
our brethren 'neath the western sky,
and hour by hour fresh lips are making
thy wondrous doings heard on high.

So be it, Lord; thy throne shall never,
like earth's proud empires, pass away;
thy kingdom stands, and grows for ever,
till all thy creatures own thy sway.

Words: John Ellerton (1826-1893)
Music: Clement Cotterill Scholefield (1839-1904)

The Blessing or The Grace

Thank you for being part of this evening's act of worship.

Choral Evensong takes place at St Mary's Whitkirk on the first Sunday of every month at 6.00 pm.

The next service of Evensong will be on Sunday 6 June 2021.

Please do join us again.

O sweet and blessed country

© Kevin Mayhew Ltd

Organ voluntary

© Kevin Mayhew Ltd

CCL licence: 668063

Generated: 2026-06-27 05.08:28

Targeting: Digital

<https://whitkirkchurch.org.uk/services/2021-05-02-evensong/>

St Mary's Church, Whitkirk

🌐 whitkirkchurch.org.uk **f** /whitkirkchurch **🐦** @stmaryswhitkirk