ST MARY'S CHURCH
Whitkirk

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

Choral Evensong

Sunday 2 January 2022 at 6.00 pm



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 1185 AD. 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 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.

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
'Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King!'
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife,
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring:
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophet-bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Words: E. H. Sears (1810-1876)
Music: English traditional melody
adapted by A. S. Sullivan (1842-1900)
Hymn Tune: NOEL

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 kneel or 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 135 verses 1-14

praise the Lord
laud ye the Name of the Lord:
Praise it O ye servants of the Lord;

Ye that stand in the house of the Lord:
In the courts of the house of our God.

praise the Lord for the Lord is gracious:
O sing praises unto his Name for it is lovely.

For why? the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself.
And Israel for his own possession.

For I know that the Lord is great:
And that our Lord is above all gods.

Whatsoever the Lord pleased
that did he in heaven and in earth:
And in the sea and in all deep places.

He bringeth forth the clouds from the ends of the world:
And sendeth forth lightnings with the rain
bringing the winds out of his treasures.

He smote the first-born of Egypt:
Both of man and beast.

He hath sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee
O thou land of Egypt:
Upon Pharaoh and all his servants.

He smote divers nations:
And slew mighty kings;

Sehon king of the Amorites and Og the king of Basan:
And all the kingdoms of Canaan;

And gave their land to be an heritage:
Even an heritage unto Israel his people.

Thy Name O Lord endureth for ever:
So doth thy memorial O Lord
from one generation to another.

For the Lord will avenge his people:
And be gracious unto his servants.

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: H. T. Smart (1813-1879)

Old Testament Lesson

I Samuel 1.20-end

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 blessèd.
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 shewèd 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 fillèd 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: G. Dyson (1883-1964)
Evening Service in the key of F

New Testament Lesson

1 John 4.7-16

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: G. Dyson (1883-1964)
Evening Service in the key of F

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 Lesser Litany is sung alternately by the cantor and

the choir.

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Please kneel or 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

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

And grant us thy salvation.

O Lord, save the Queen.

And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.

And make thy chosen people joyful.

O 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

Almighty God,
who in the birth of thy Son hast poured upon us
the new light of thine incarnate Word
and revealed to us the fullness of thy love:
help us so to walk in his light and dwell in his love
that we may know the fullness of his joy;
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

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 sit.

'In the bleak mid-winter'

In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

Our God, heav'n cannot hold him
Nor earth sustain;
Heav'n and earth shall flee away
When he comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part,
Yet what I can I give him,
Give my heart.

Words: C. G. Rossetti (1830-1894)
Music: H. E. Darke (1888-1976)

The Sermon

Hymn

Please stand.

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n, to earth come down,
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
All thy faithful mercies crown.

Jesu, thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation;
Enter ev'ry trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
Let us all thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Never more thy temples leave.

Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve thee as thy hosts above;
Pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in thee.

Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heav'n we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!

Words: C. Wesley (1707-1788)
Music: J. Stainer (1840-1901)
Hymn Tune: LOVE DIVINE

The Prayers

Please kneel or sit.

Hymn

Please stand.

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O Holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

Words: P. Brooks (1835-1893)
Music: English traditional melody
Verses 1 & 2 arranged by R. Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
Verse 3 arranged by T. Armstrong (1898-1994)
Hymn Tune: FOREST GREEN

The Blessing or The Grace

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

The next Choral Evensong at St Mary's will be on ***Sunday 6 February 2022 at 4.30 pm****, when the Girls' Choir of Bradford Cathedral will be joining us to sing.*

Please follow the instructions of the stewards as you leave the building and remember to clean your hands.

Preces & responses
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Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis
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In the bleak mid-winter
© Stainer & Bell Ltd

O little town of Bethlehem
Musical arrangement of verses 1 and 2 © Oxford University Press
Musical arrangement of verse 3 © The Royal School of Church Music

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Targeting: Digital
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