

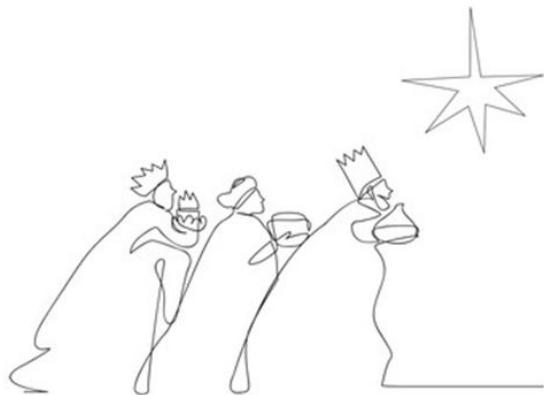


Where all find a welcome and are nurtured in their journey with Christ.

# Festal Evensong

The Epiphany

Sunday 4 January 2026, 6.00 pm



# Welcome to St Mary's

## Support our work

St Mary's is a charity which receives no funding from the government and is entirely dependent on donations and fees to keep its doors open, continue its work in the community, and maintain its buildings and outdoor spaces.

If you would like to donate to support us you can give during the service as giving plates are passed around. Alternatively, you can place your offering on the plate by the door as you leave or tap your contactless card or device, or give online by card or directly from your bank by scanning this QR Code with your phone's camera or by visiting [wkrk.uk/donate](https://wkrk.uk/donate).



If you'd like to give in some other way, find out about planned giving, or learn how we use donations then please ask any member of our team.

## Accessible for everyone

We aim to be accessible for everyone. For more information on accessibility at St Mary's please see [wkrk.uk/access](https://wkrk.uk/access) or ask any member of our team.



## Follow the instructions of our stewards

Please follow all instructions from our stewards.

## Digital order of service available

If you prefer, you can follow our order of service on your own phone or tablet. Just visit [wkrk.uk/oos](https://wkrk.uk/oos) on your browser or scan this QR Code.



## ► This service is streamed

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## ☂ Safeguarding

Our Parish Safeguarding team can be contacted at any time. You can talk to Rev'd Claire or to Janet Blenkinsop, our Parish Safeguarding Officer, you can email [safeguarding@whitkirkchurch.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@whitkirkchurch.org.uk), or you can find more information and contact details at [wkrk.uk/safe](http://wkrk.uk/safe).



# 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 and thirty years.

# The Service of Choral Evensong

*Our worship begins at the sound of the bell, please stand as the sacred ministers enter, during which the introit hymn is sung.*

## Hymn

**Hills of the North, rejoice,  
echoing songs arise,  
hail with united voice  
him who made earth and skies:  
he comes in righteousness and love,  
he brings salvation from above.**

**Isles of the Southern seas,  
sing to the listening earth,  
carry on ev'ry breeze,  
hope of a world's new birth:  
in Christ shall all be made anew,  
his word is sure, his promise true.**

**Lands of the East, arise,  
he is your brightest morn,  
greet him with joyous eyes,  
praise shall his path adorn:  
the God whom we have longed to know  
in Christ draws near, and calls you now.**

**Shores of the utmost West,  
lands of the setting sun,  
welcome the heav'nly guest  
in whom the dawn has come:  
he brings a never-ending light  
who triumphed o'er our darkest night.**

**Shout, as you journey on,  
songs be in ev'ry mouth;  
lo, from the North they come,  
from East and West and South.  
in Jesus all shall find their rest,  
in him the sons of earth be blest.**

*Words: from the New English Hymnal  
based on Charles Edward Oakley (1832-1865)*

*Music: Martin Shaw (1875-1958)  
Hymn Tune: LITTLE CORNARD*

## **Sentences of the Scriptures**

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us: but, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*I St. John 1.8,9*

*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;

*Please kneel or sit.*

## **The General Confession**

**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**

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 Preces

*The Preces (short petitions) 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 Choir sings the psalm appointed for today.*

*Please sit.*

## **Psalm 98**

*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.*

*Choir*    O sing unto the Lord a new song :  
                  for he hath done marvellous things.

With his own right hand and with his holy arm :  
                  hath he gotten himself the victory.

The Lord declarèd his salvation :  
                  his righteousness hath he openly shewèd  
                  in the sight of the heathen.

He hath remembered his mercy and truth  
                  toward the house of Israel :  
                  and all the ends of the world  
                  have seen the salvation of our God.

Shew yourselves joyful unto the Lord all ye lands :  
                  sing rejoice and give thanks.

Praise the Lord upon the harp :  
                  sing to the harp with a psalm of thanksgiving.

With trumpets also and shawms :  
                  O shew yourselves joyful before the Lord the King.

Let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is :  
the round world and they that dwell therein.

Let the floods clap their hands  
and let the hills be joyful together before the Lord :  
for he is come to judge the earth.

With righteousness shall he judge the world :  
and the people with equity.

*Please stand.*

*Choir*      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.

## Old Testament Lesson

*Please sit.*

The First Lesson is taken from the sixtieth chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah, beginning to read at the first verse.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far

away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall be acceptable on my altar, and I will glorify my glorious house. Who are these that fly like a cloud, and like doves to their windows? For the coastlands shall wait for me, the ships of Tarshish first, to bring your children from far away, their silver and gold with them, for the name of the Lord your God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because he has glorified you.

*Isaiah 60.1-9*

*At the end the reader says:*

**Here endeth the First Lesson.**

*After a short silence, please stand.*

## **Magnificat**

*The Magnificat is the song of praise Mary sang after learning that she would give birth to Jesus, as recounted in Luke's gospel. During the singing of the Magnificat the altar will be censed.*

*Choir*     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.

*Luke 1.46-55*

*Choir*    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.

*Please sit.*

## **New Testament Lesson**

The Second Lesson is taken from the second chapter of Saint John's gospel beginning to read at the first verse.

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him,

‘Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.’ Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there for a few days.

*John 2.1-12*

*At the end the reader says:*

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

*After a short silence, please stand.*

## **Nunc Dimittis**

*The Nunc Dimittis is also known as the Song of Simeon. Luke’s gospel 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.*

*Choir*      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.

*Choir*    **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.

*Please remain standing.*

## **The Apostles' Creed**

**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 catholic Church;  
the communion of saints;  
the forgiveness of sins;  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.**

**Amen.**

## **The Lesser Litany and the Responses**

*These prayers bind together themes of praise, mercy and the desire for God's protection as night draws in. The Lesser Litany, the Lord's Prayer and the Responses are 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 heav'n,  
hallowed be thy name.  
thy kingdom come.  
thy will be done,  
in earth as it is in heav'n.**

**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.**

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

**And grant us thy salvation.**

O Lord, save the King.

**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**

O God, who by the leading of a star  
didst manifest thy only-begotten Son to the Gentiles;  
mercifully grant, that we,  
which know thee now by faith,  
may after this life have the fruition  
of thy glorious Godhead;  
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.**

*Please sit as the Choir sings the anthem.*

*Choir* Clear in the darkness a light shines in Bethlehem:  
angels are singing, their sound fills the air.  
Wise men have journeyed to greet their Messiah;  
but only a mother and baby lie there.

*‘Ave Maria, ave Maria.’*

*Hear the soft lullaby the angel hosts sing.*

*‘Ave Maria, ave Maria.*

*Maiden, and mother of Jesus our King’.*

Where are his courtiers, and who are his people?  
Why does he bear neither sceptre nor crown?  
Shepherds his courtiers, the poor for his people,  
with peace as his sceptre and love for his crown.

*‘Ave Maria, ave Maria.’*

*Hear the soft lullaby the angel hosts sing.*

*‘Ave Maria, ave Maria.*

*Maiden, and mother of Jesus our King’.*

What though your treasures are not gold or incense?  
Lay them before him with hearts full of love.  
Praise to the Christ child, and praise to his mother  
who bore us a Saviour by grace from above.

*'Ave Maria, ave Maria.'*  
*Hear the soft lullaby the angel hosts sing.*  
*'Ave Maria, ave Maria.*  
*Maiden, and mother of Jesus our King'.*

*Words & Music: John Rutter (b. 1945)*

*Please remain seated.*

## **Sermon**

## **Hymn**

*Please stand.*

**Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,  
dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;  
star of the East, the horizon adorning,  
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.**

**Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining,  
low lies his head with the beasts of the stall:  
angels adore him in slumber reclining,  
maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.**

**Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,  
odours of Edom and off'rings divine?  
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,  
myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?**

**Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
vainly with gifts would his favour secure;  
richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.**

**Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,  
dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;  
star of the East, the horizon adorning,  
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.**

Words: Reginald Heber (1783-1826)  
Music: Joseph Francis Thrupp (1827-1867)

## Prayers

*Please kneel or sit.*

## Offertory Hymn

*Please stand. During this hymn a collection, our financial offering in support of the work of the church both at St. Mary's and across our diocese, is taken.*

*You can place cash or giving envelopes on the collection plates as they are passed around. If you would prefer, or if you miss the plate, you can also give by scanning this QR code, or by tapping your contactless card or device on the card reader by the door as you leave.*



**Songs of thankfulness and praise,  
Jesus, Lord, to thee we raise,  
manifested by the star  
to the sages from afar;  
branch of royal David's stem,  
in thy birth at Bethlehem;  
anthems be to thee addressed:  
God in man, made manifest.**

**Manifest at Jordan's stream,  
prophet, priest and King supreme,  
and at Cana wedding-guest,  
in the Godhead manifest,  
manifest in pow'r divine,  
changing water into wine;  
anthems be to thee addressed:  
God in man, made manifest.**

**Manifest in making whole,  
palsied limbs and fainting soul,  
manifest in valiant fight,  
quelling all the devil's might,  
manifest in gracious will,  
ever bringing good from ill;  
anthems be to thee addressed:  
God in man, made manifest.**

**Sun and moon shall darkened be,  
stars shall fall, the heav'ns shall flee;  
Christ will then like lightning shine,  
all will see his glorious sign.  
all will then the trumpet hear,  
all will see the judge appear;  
thou by all wilt be confessed:  
God in man, made manifest.**

**Grant us grace to see thee, Lord,  
mirrored in thy holy word;  
may we imitate thee now,  
and be pure, as pure art thou;  
that we like to thee may be  
at thy great Epiphany,  
and may praise thee, ever blest,  
God in man, made manifest.**

*Words: Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885)*

*Music: Charles Steggall (1826-1905)*

*Hymn Tune: SAINT EDMUND*

## The Blessing

The peace of God  
which passeth all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds  
in the knowledge and love of God,  
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;  
and the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost,  
be amongst you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

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

*Please join us again on Sunday 1 February at 6.00 pm for 'Festal Evensong  
for Candlemas'. All are welcome.*

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## Our regular services

Sung Eucharist:	Every Sunday at 10.00 am
Said Eucharist:	Every Wednesday at 10.00 am
Choral Evensong:	First Sunday of the month at 6.00 pm
Compline:	First Wednesday of the month at 8.30 pm
Sanctuary:	Second Thursday of the month at 6.30 pm
Sacred Space:	Last Thursday of the month at 6.00 pm
Daily Prayers:	Tuesday to Saturday at 8.30am and 5.30pm

## Contact us

If you'd like to talk to us you can call us on **0113 264 5790**, send an email to **hello@whitkirkchurch.org.uk**, or find more details on our website at **whitkirkchurch.org.uk/contact**.

To help us reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030,  
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St Mary's Church, Whitkirk 390 Selby Road Leeds LS15 0AA

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