



St James's
PICCADILLY

Choral Evensong

According to the 1662 Book of
Common Prayer

**Sunday 8th February 2026
at 3pm**

With St James's Lay Singers and Singing Scholars

Organist: Angelina Ding

Director of Music: Michael Haslam

Associate Choral Director: Harrison Knights



The service of Evensong is an historic one from the foundational prayerbook of the Anglican Communion: the Book of Common Prayer 1662. This prayerbook was a key document in the English Reformation as it brought together traditions from the Roman Catholic church (for example, singing the Magnificat at Vespers) with the Protestant insistence that the Bible was to be read in the vernacular language of the people.

The architect of the Prayer Book, Thomas Cranmer, took the monastic services of Matins, Lauds, Vespers and so on and condensed them into two main services of Morning and Evening Prayer, which all clergy still undertake at their ordination to say every day. But the point of these new services was that they were not to be restricted to religious communities; they were services of the people sung or said by the people in their own language.

Evening Prayer according to the Book of Common Prayer was, in its time, a radical service, but one that acknowledged its debt to the past as well as creating something new for the future. It has been said or sung in churches ever since as a way of thanking God for the day that is past; and in cathedrals is sung often every day of the week. For the congregation it has evolved into a service that is a mixture of participation by speaking or singing and participation by meditation while the choir sings.

The congregation sing the hymns, and say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and some of the responses. The choir sing the canticles: Magnificat (the Song of Mary from Luke's gospel) and Nunc Dimittis (the Song of Simeon from Luke's gospel) and "in quires and places where they sing" an anthem too.

ORDER OF SERVICE

INTROIT

*The choir sings **O Blest Creator Of The Light** (plainsong)*

O Blest Creator of the light,
Who mak'st the day with radiance bright,
And o'er the forming world didst call
The light from chaos first of all;

Whose wisdom joined in meet array
The morn and eve, and named them Day:
Night comes with all its darkling fears;
Regard thy people's prayers and tears.

Lest, sunk in sin, and whelm'd with strife,
They lose the gift of endless life;
While thinking but the thought of time,
They weave new chains of woe and crime.

But grant them grace that they may strain
The heavenly gate and prize to gain:
Each harmful lure aside to cast,
And purge away each error past.

O Father, that we ask be done,
Through Jesus Christ, thine only Son;
Who, with the Holy Ghost and thee,
Doth live and reign eternally. Amen

*Office Hymn, Sunday Evenings from Epiphany to Lent
6th century, translated JM Neale*

RESPONSES: *Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)*

The minister sings

O Lord, open thou our lips.

The choir sings

And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

Minister

O God, make speed to save us.

Choir

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Here, all standing up, the minister shall sing

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

Choir

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

Amen.

Minister

Praise ye the Lord.

Choir

The Lord's name be praised.

Please sit.

PSALM 42 *chant: S.S. Wesley (1810-1876)*

The choir sings

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks:
so longeth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God:
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?

My tears have been my meat day and night:
while they daily say unto me, Where is now thy God?

Now when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart by myself:
for I went with the multitude, and brought them forth into the
house of God;

In the voice of praise and thanksgiving:
among such as keep holyday.

*Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul:
and why art thou so disquieted within me?*

*Put thy trust in God:
for I will yet give him thanks for the help of his countenance.*

My God, my soul is vex'd within me:
therefore will I remember thee concerning the land of Jordan,
and the little hill of Hermon.

One deep calleth another, because of the noise of the
waterpipes:
all thy waves and storms are gone over me.

The Lord hath granted his lovingkindness in the daytime:
and in the nightseason did I sing of him, and made my prayer
unto the God of my life.

I will say unto the God of my strength, Why hast thou forgotten me:

why go I thus heavily while the enemy oppresseth me?

My bones are smitten asunder as with a sword:
while mine enemies that trouble me cast me in the teeth;

Namely while they say daily unto me:
where is now thy God?

*Why art thou so vex'd, O my soul:
and why art thou so disquieted within me?*

*O put thy trust in God: for I will yet thank him,
which is the help of my countenance, and my God.*

PSALM 43 *chant: S.S. Wesley (1810-1876)*

Give sentence with me, O God,
and defend my cause against the ungodly people:
O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man.

For thou art the God of my strength,
why hast thou put me from thee:
and why go I so heavily while the enemy oppresseth me?

O send out thy light and thy truth that they may lead me:
and bring me unto thy holy hill and to thy dwelling.

And that I may go unto the altar of God,
even unto the God of my joy and gladness:
and upon the harp will I give thanks unto thee O God my God.

*Why art thou so heavy, O my soul:
and why art thou so disquieted within me?*

*O put thy trust in God:
for I will yet give him thanks,
which is the help of my countenance, and my God.*

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.

Please sit.

THE FIRST LESSON

Revelation 4

After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open!
And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne!
And the one seated there looks like jasper and carnelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal. Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion,

the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle.

And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing, "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come." And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing, "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

Here ends the first lesson.

Please stand.

MAGNIFICAT

Short Service by Edmund Hooper (c.1553-1621)

The choir sings

My soul doth magnify the Lord:
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded:
the lowliness of his handmaiden.
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.

Please sit.

THE SECOND LESSON

Luke 12.16-31

Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is

with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”

He said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

Here ends the second lesson.

Please stand.

NUNC DIMITTIS

Short Service by Edmund Hooper (c.1553-1621)

The choir sings

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.

Then shall be said the Apostles' Creed, by the minister and the people 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

The minister says

The Lord be with you.

All say

And with thy spirit.

Please sit or kneel.

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Then the minister, clerks, and people shall say the Lord's Prayer
with a loud voice.*

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on 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.**

Then the minister standing up shall sing

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

Choir

And grant us thy salvation.

Minister

O Lord, save the King.

Choir

And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Minister

Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.

Choir

And make thy chosen people joyful.

Minister

O Lord, save thy people.

Choir

And bless thine inheritance.

Minister

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

Choir

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

Minister

O God, make clean our hearts within us.

Choir

And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

*Then shall follow three Collects; the first of the day; the second
for Peace; the third for Aid against all Perils.*

THE COLLECT FOR CANDLEMAS

Almighty and ever-living God,
we humbly beseech thy majesty,
that, as thy only-begotten Son
was this day presented in the Temple,
in substance of our flesh,
so we may be presented unto thee
with pure and clean hearts,
by thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

THE SECOND 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 THIRD 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.

In quires and places where they sing, here followeth the anthem:

Ave Regina Cœlorum, text from the Divine Office, traditionally
sung at the conclusion of Compline from Candlemas to Maundy
Thursday, music: William Byrd c. 1540-1623 (*Gradualia I*, 1605)

Ave Regina cœlorum,
Ave Domina Angelorum:
Salve radix, salve porta,
Ex qua mundo lux est orta:

Gaude Virgo gloriosa,
Super omnes speciosa,
Vale, o valde decora,
Et pro nobis Christum exora.

Hail, Queen of Heaven.

Hail, Lady of Angels

Hail, root, hail, gate

From whom unto the world a light has arisen:

*Rejoice, glorious Virgin,
Lovely beyond all others,
Farewell, most beautiful maiden,
And pray for us to Christ.*

THE PRAYERS

HYMN

[Tune: Nottingham; Words: Frances Ridley Havergal]

**Take our lives and let them be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take our moments and our days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

**Take our hands, and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take our feet, and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.**

**Take our voices and let them sing
always, only, for our king;
take our lips, and let them be
filled with messages from thee.**

**Take our silver and our gold,
not a mite would we withhold;
take our intellects and use
ev'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose.**

**Take our wills, and make them yours;
they shall be no longer ours
take our hearts, they are your own;
they shall be your royal throne.**

**Take our love, our Lord, we pour
at thy feet our treasure store;
take ourselves and we will be
ever, only, all for thee.**

THE SERMON

The Reverend Dr Ayla Lepine

During the final hymn, a collection will be taken. If you have cash, please fill in a Gift Aid envelope.

If you don't have cash, please use the tap donate device in the collection plate, which is set to £5, or the QR code on page 18.

HYMN

[Tune: Alberta; Words: John Henry Newman]

**Lead, kindly Light, amid th'encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead thou me on.
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.**

**I was not ever thus, nor pray'd that thou
Shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my path; but now
Lead thou me on.
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will; remember not past years.**

So long thy pow'r hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile!

THE BLESSING

The minister says

Go forth into the world in peace;
be of good courage, hold fast that which is good,
render to no one evil for evil.

Strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak,
help the afflicted, honour all people.

Love and serve God,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit,
and the blessing of God;
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.



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