



St James's
PICCADILLY

Choral Evensong

to mark International Women's Day

According to the 1662 Book of
Common Prayer

Sunday 8th March 2026
at 3pm

With St James's Lay Singers and Singing Scholars
Organist: Ashley Chow
Choir 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 **Resignation**, music and lyrics by Florence Price (1887-1953), in honour of Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.*

My life is a pathway of sorrow;
I've struggled and toiled in the sun,
With hope that the dawn of tomorrow
Would break on a work that is done.

My Master has pointed the way,
He taught me in prayer to say:
"Lord, give us this day and our daily bread,"
I hunger, yet I shall be fed.

My feet, they are wounded and dragging,
My body is tortured with pain,
My heart, it is shattered and flagging--
What matter, if Heaven I gain?

Of happiness once I have tasted;
'Twas only an instant it paused.
Tho' brief was the hour that I wasted,
Forever the woe that it caused.

I'm tired and want to go home.
My mother and sister are there;
They're waiting for me to come
Where mansions are bright and fair.

RESPONSES: *Kathryn Rose*

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 51 *chant by Lily Robson*

The choir sings

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness:
according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine
offences.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness:
and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my faults:
and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee only have I sinned,
and done this evil in thy sight:
that thou mightest be justified in thy saying,
and clear when thou art judged.

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness:
and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts:
and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean:
thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness:
that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Turn thy face from my sins:
and put out all my misdeeds.

Make me a clean heart, O God:
and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence:
and take not thy holy Spirit from me.

O give me the comfort of thy help again:
and stablish me with thy free Spirit.

Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked:
and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou that art the
God of my health:
and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness.

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord:
and my mouth shall shew thy praise.

For thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee:
but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit:
a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise.

O be favourable and gracious unto Sion:
build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness,
with the burnt-offerings and oblations:
then shall they offer young bullocks upon thine altar.

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

Ephesians 6.10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.

Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

Here ends the first lesson.

Please stand.

MAGNIFICAT

King's College Service by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange (b. 1971)

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

John 2.13-22

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Here ends the second lesson.

Please stand.

NUNC DIMITTIS

King's College Service by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange (b. 1971)

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 THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Almighty God,
whose most dear Son went not up to joy
but first he suffered pain,
and entered not into glory before he was crucified:
mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross,
may find it none other than the way of life and peace;
through Jesus Christ thy Son 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:

O Love, words: George Matheson (1842-1906) adapted,
music: Elaine Hagenberg (b.1979).

O Love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee.
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.

O Joy that seeks me through the pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee.
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain,
that morn shall tearless be.

THE PRAYERS

HYMN

[Words and Music by Bernadette Farrell (b.1957), based on Psalm 139]

**O God, you search me and you know me.
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.
When I walk or lie down, you are before me,
Ever the maker and keeper of my days.**

**You know my resting and my rising.
You discern my purpose from afar,
and with love everlasting you besiege me:
In ev'ry moment of life or death, you are.**

**Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,
you have known its meaning through and through.
You are with me beyond my understanding:
God of my present, my past and future too.**

**Although your Spirit is upon me,
still I search for shelter from your light.
There is nowhere on earth I can escape you:
Even the darkness is radiant in your sight.**

**For you created me and shaped me,
gave me life within my mother's womb.
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you:
Safe in your hands, all creation is made new.**

THE SERMON

The Reverend Lucy Winkett

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 17.

HYMN

[Tune: Ewing; Words: Ally Barrett (b. 1975)]

**In every generation
Some rise to claim the hour
And break oppression's silence
By speaking truth to power.
When courage meets with conflict
Our hearts must still be stirred,
That in our words and actions
God's love is seen and heard.**

**We claim a shared vocation
As stewards of this earth,
Affirming all God's people
In dignity and worth.
May all our children's children
Take their intended place
In all that God has purposed:
One equal, human race.**

**O God, in whose great kingdom
The first and last shall meet,
With love and justice freeing
The mighty from their seat;
May all your kingdom-builders
Continue true and strong,
Creating, in our own day,
A place where all belong.**

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.



In addition to the physical collection, if you do not have cash with you, please scan this QR code with your smartphone to make a one-off or regular donation.

Alternatively, please visit sjp.org.uk/donate, or us one of the tap donation points in the church. Donations will appear on your bank statement as 'Supported Business'.

Easter Lilies for Remembrance

Donations are now being accepted towards the cost of the floral decoration of the church at Easter.

If you would like to **sponsor a white lily** in memory of someone you love who has died, please email David in the parish office with the name(s) at administrator@sjp.org.uk



The names of those being commemorated will be included in the order of service on Easter Day - Sunday 5th April.

To make a donation, please go to:

<https://sjp.churchsuite.com/donate/fund/1vundziy>

or scan the QR code.



Lent Contemplative Space on Zoom

A space for prayer, readings and silence on Fridays through Lent, 6pm-7pm until 27th March.

All are welcome to join for one or all sessions.

Resources and Zoom link can be found at

www.sjp.org.uk/whats-on/lent-contemplative-space





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