



# Choral Evensong



Easter Day  
Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2025  
5.30pm  
St Mary's Kidlington

Wherever you are from and whatever has brought you here today, you are most welcome at this service of Choral Evensong. The music in this service is sung by the choir offering praise to God on behalf of those gathered here and around the world; the people join silently in prayer alongside them and in speaking together the Confession, The Lord's Prayer, the Creed and in singing the Hymns.

The service derives from the medieval church and is offered here in classical form from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. It is deeply rooted in ancient texts and the liturgy follows a set pattern. Following the Opening Sentences, Confession, Absolution, and Lord's Prayer, the Choir sings the Preces (short petitions) and the Psalms appointed for this day in the evening. Evensong brings before us God's plan of salvation. Following the Psalms, the Old Testament lesson recalls God's promise to Abraham and looks forward to the coming of a Messiah. The Magnificat links the Old and New Testaments. It is the splendid song of the Blessed Virgin Mary before Jesus was born and has become the Church's greatest hymn of the Incarnation, by which God came to earth to save us. Following the New Testament lesson, from which we learn about Jesus's life and teaching here on earth, the Choir sings the Nunc Dimittis, the prayer of Simeon, an aged man who longed to see the Christ before he died. All then stand and, facing the altar used at the Holy Eucharist, address God in the words of the Apostles' Creed. The Officiant and the Choir then sing The Lesser Litany and the Collects: set prayers that with simplicity collect our thoughts, bidding God to strengthen our faith and protect us from all perils as evening falls. The Anthem follows, meditating on Biblical and Prayer Book texts and providing a sermon in music.

Distinct from the noisy world around us, Choral Evensong anchors us in the presence of the Living Christ. It is a place for rest and refreshment. There is space to listen to music, to pray quietly for yourself and for other people and to put down the burdens of the day.

*Instructions to stand are invitations only – if it is more comfortable for you to remain seated you are welcome to do so.*

*Please stand for the entry of the Choir and Clergy*

## **Welcome**

### **Hymn:**

Ye choirs of new Jerusalem,  
your sweetest notes employ,  
The Paschal victory to hymn  
in strains of holy joy.

For Judah's Lion bursts His chains,  
crushing the serpent's head;  
And cries aloud through death's domains  
to wake the imprisoned dead.

Devouring depths of hell their prey  
at his command restore;  
His ransomed hosts pursue their way  
where Jesus goes before.

Triumphant in His glory now  
to Him all power is given;  
To Him in one communion bow  
all saints in earth and heaven.

While we, His soldiers, praise our king,  
his mercy we implore,  
Within His palace bright to bring  
and keep us evermore.

All glory to the Father be,  
all glory to the Son,  
All glory, Holy Ghost, to Thee,  
while endless ages run. Alleluia! Amen.

St Fulbert of Chartres (d. 1028) tr. R. Campbell (1814-68)

## Introduction

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. *1 Peter 1.3*

Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. *Joel 2.13*

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 sit or kneel*

**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.**

Grant, we beseech thee, merciful Lord, to thy faithful people pardon and peace; that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**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. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.**

## **Evening Prayer**

*Please sit*

*The Preces and Responses this evening are sung to the setting by William Smith (1603 -1645)*

Minister O Lord, open thou our lips.

Choir And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

Minister O God, make speed to save us.

Choir O Lord, make haste to help us.

(Minister) 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.

**Psalm: 6** (Chant: W Croft)

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

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

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

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

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

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

7 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.

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

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

10 He smote divers nations : and slew mighty kings;

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

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

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

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

15 As for the images of the heathen, they are but silver and gold : the work of men's hands.

16 They have mouths, and speak not : eyes have they, but they see not.

17 They have ears, and yet they hear not : neither is there any breath in their mouths.

18 They that make them are like unto them : and so are all they that put their trust in them.

19 Praise the Lord, ye house of Israel : praise the Lord, ye house of Aaron.

20 Praise the Lord, ye house of Levi : ye that fear the Lord, praise the Lord.

21 Praised be the Lord out of Sion : who dwelleth at Jerusalem.

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 Reading: Isaiah 43:1-21**

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob,  
he who formed you, O Israel:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name,  
you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;  
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,  
and the flame shall not consume you.

For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.  
I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.  
Because you are precious in my sight, and honoured, and I love you,  
I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life.  
Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the  
east, and from the west I will gather you;  
I will say to the north, 'Give them up', and to the south, 'Do not  
withhold;  
bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the  
earth— everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my  
glory, whom I formed and made.'

Bring forth the people who are blind, yet have eyes,  
who are deaf, yet have ears!

Let all the nations gather together, and let the peoples assemble.  
Who among them declared this, and foretold to us the former things?  
Let them bring their witnesses to justify them,  
and let them hear and say, 'It is true.'

You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servant whom I have  
chosen,  
so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he.  
Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.  
I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no saviour.  
I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god  
among you;

and you are my witnesses, says the Lord.  
I am God, and also henceforth I am He; there is no one who can  
deliver from my hand; I work and who can hinder it?

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:  
For your sake I will send to Babylon and break down all the bars,  
and the shouting of the Chaldeans will be turned to lamentation.  
I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:

Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honour me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

*The canticles this evening are sung to the setting in A by Herbert Sumsion (1899–1995).*

*Please stand*

### **Magnificat: Luke 1**

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.



*Please sit*

### **New Testament Reading: 1 Corinthians 15.1-11**

Now I should remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain.

For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to someone untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace towards me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

*Please stand*

### **Nunc Dimittis: Luke 2:29**

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.

*Please turn to face the East Window*

## 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 Catholick Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the Life everlasting. Amen.**

Minister The Lord be with you.

Choir And with thy spirit.

Minister Let us pray.

*Please sit or kneel*

(Minister) Lord, have mercy upon us

Choir Christ, have mercy upon us.

(Minister) Lord, have mercy upon us.

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.

Minister 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.

### **The First Collect: Collect of the Day**

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth; Mercifully hear the supplications of thy people, and grant us thy peace all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **The Second Collect: 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: 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.

**Anthem:** As one who has slept – John Tavener (1944-2013)

*As one who has slept, the Lord has risen, and rising He has saved us. Alleluia. (Liturgy of St Basil for Great and Holy Saturday)*

### **Sermon**

### **Prayers**

*Ending with the congregation saying the Grace*

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.**

*Please stand*

**Hymn:**

Love's redeeming work is done;  
fought the fight, the battle won:  
lo, our Sun's eclipse is o'er,  
lo, he sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;  
Christ has burst the gates of hell;  
death in vain forbids his rise;  
Christ has opened paradise.

Lives again our glorious King;  
where, O death, is now thy sting?  
Dying once, he all doth save;  
where thy victory, O grave?

Soar we now where Christ has led,  
following out exalted Head;  
made like him, like him we rise,  
ours the cross, the grave, the skies.

Hail the Lord of earth and heaven!  
praise to thee by both be given:  
thee we greet triumphant now;  
hail, the Resurrection thou!

Charles Wesley (1707-88)

**Blessing**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our 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 Spirit, be amongst us and remain with us always. Amen.

*Please remain standing as the Choir and Clergy depart. You are invited to sit and listen to the organ voluntary, or leave whenever you feel ready.*

**Organ Voluntary:** Sun dance – Bob Chilcott (1955-)

*Thank you for joining us, and a very Happy Easter to you.  
Our next evensong is on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May.*