



Great St Mary's  
THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH CAMBRIDGE



# A Service of Evensong

**W**ELCOME to Great St Mary's, the University Church. Wherever you have come from, and whoever you are, consider yourself at home here with us. If this is your first time here, please introduce yourself after the service. We'd love to get to know you better.

Worship services have been sung here at Great St Mary's for more than eight centuries, and today's Evensong service uses the traditional language of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

From earliest times, Christians gathered at regular hours during each day and night to respond to God's word with praise on behalf of all creation and with intercession for the salvation of the world. By the fourth century, if not earlier, morning prayer (Mattins) and evening prayer (Evensong) had emerged as the pre-eminent hours for the offering of this sacrifice of praise.

Evensong combines prayer, song and the spoken word. The custom of singing in worship reflects the belief that 'he who sings prays twice'. Music has always had a key role in Christian worship: the Scriptures record how the early followers of Jesus would sing together and, over the centuries, composers have created extraordinary music to be sung at Evensong.

Most of what is sung and said in this evening's service comes from the Bible. Holy Scripture is central to Christian worship, and we will hear readings from the Bible, prayers based on Biblical passages, and a brief sermon reflecting on the message that the Bible has for our modern life today.

Wherever you are on your journey with God, do know that you are welcome here at Great St Mary's, today and every day. We are a diverse community, from many countries and backgrounds, and we are delighted to have you here with us.

[www.greatstmarys.org](http://www.greatstmarys.org)



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10/2021

# A Service of Evensong

ORGAN PRELUDE

*You are invited to STAND as the ministers process to the front of the church.*

WELCOME AND NOTICES

***On most weekdays, the service continues on page 4 with the Preces & Responses***

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

*Please KNEEL OR SIT.*

*The minister introduces the Confession, and together we say:*

**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 minister pronounces the absolution.*

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## **Confession and Absolution**

*The confession comes at the start of Evensong, as a way to acknowledge collectively the mistakes and sins that we all carry. Confession is not meant to make us feel worthless but to free us to begin our prayer renewed and forgiven. The spelling “Jesu” was a common way to spell Jesus until the 16th Century and is retained in the 1662 Book of Common 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.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

PRECES AND RESPONSES

*On those occasions when there is no choir, the congregation says the parts marked 'choir'*

○ Lord, open thou our lips.

*Choir* **And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.**

○ God, make speed to save us.

*Choir* **○ Lord, make haste to help us.**

*Please* **STAND, as you are able.**

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.**

Praise ye the Lord.

*Choir* **The Lord's name be praised.**

**The Lord's Prayer**

*In the Gospels, the disciples ask Jesus to teach them how to pray. It is this prayer that Jesus gives to his disciples in response. In its simplicity and directness, the Lord's Prayer touches both on our material and our spiritual dependence on God—and our hope in the great vision that God has for our world.*

**Preces and Responses**

*These prayers, usually sung by the minister and the choir, begin by asking God's guidance for our worship ('O Lord, open thou our lips'). At the end of these prayers is the doxology—from the Greek  $\delta\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\alpha$ , 'word of glory,' Derived from the kaddish in Judaism, ending many prayers in the synagogue, the doxology is a brief expression of praise to God.*

**The Psalm**

*The Psalms are the ancient hymns and poetry of Judaism, and have a central place in Christian worship. The founding light of Christian meditative prayer and monasticism, Anthony the Great (c. 251–356), commended a spiritual practice of 'singing psalms before and after sleep.'*

Please **SIT** for the psalm.

## THE FIRST LESSON

Please **SIT** for the reading of the first lesson.

## FIRST CANTICLE: MAGNIFICAT

LUKE 1:45-55

Please **STAND**, as you are able. On occasion, a different canticle will be sung.

† 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.

## THE SECOND LESSON

Please **SIT**.

**Scripture Readings**

*The first reading is usually taken from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) of the Bible. This sacred collection of stories, laws, poetry, and prophecies was the Bible as Jesus knew it. The second reading comes from the New Testament, the books of the Bible which tell the stories of Jesus and the writings of some of his earliest followers. The Scripture readings are assigned from a lectionary — an order of readings ensuring that we hear the breadth of the Bible.*

**Canticle: Magnificat**

*The canticles (literally 'little songs') come from the sacred poetry and hymns of the Bible. The Magnificat, known also as the Song of Mary, comes from Luke's Gospel. These are the words which the mother of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, sings out to her cousin Elizabeth. It is a song sung by a one woman to another, declaring an unshakable faith in a God of justice and love, and draws on the even more ancient Song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1–10). The canticle may be sung in this or another translation, in English or in Latin.*

Please **STAND**, as you are able. On occasion, a different canticle will be sung.

† 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.

### THE APOSTLES' CREED

Please remain **STANDING**, as you are able. The choir joins the congregation in facing East.

**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.**

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#### Canticle: Nunc Dimittis

*The Nunc Dimittis, known also as the Song of Simeon, was sung by the prophet Simeon when the infant Jesus was presented at the Temple in Jerusalem. At Evensong, this canticle draws a parallel between the end of each day and the end of life, inviting us to reflect with hope and joy on our own mortality, while setting aside the cares and worries of the day and embracing the peace of God's rest. The canticle may be sung in this or another translation, in English or in Latin.*

#### The Apostles' Creed

*The word creed comes from the Latin credo, 'I believe' (from Proto-Indo-European, 'to give one's heart'). The Apostles' Creed is one of the most ancient confessions of faith in Christianity. The theology of the Creed contains a basic understanding of the Christian faith shared across the centuries and across denominations —literally 'catholic', that is, universal.*

## THE RESPONSES (LESSER LITANY)

*On those occasions when there is no choir, the congregation says the parts marked 'choir.'*

The Lord be with you.

*Choir* **And with thy spirit.**

Let us pray.

*Please* **KNEEL or SIT.**

Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Choir* **Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Choir* **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.**

○ Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

*Choir* **And grant us thy salvation.**

○ Lord, save the Queen.

*Choir* **And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.**

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.

*Choir* **And make thy chosen people joyful.**

○ Lord, save thy people.

*Choir* **And bless thine inheritance.**

Give peace in our time, ○ Lord.

*Choir* **Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, ○ God.**

○ God, make clean our hearts within us.

*Choir* **And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.**

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### **The Responses (Lesser Litany)**

*These prayers, sung between the choir and the minister, follow a form which neatly encapsulates prayers for community, state, church, and the individual. The litany draws on Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Orthodox prayers.*

## THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

*In Lent and Advent, a seasonal Collect follows the Collect of the Day.*

## 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 for the anthem. On occasion the anthem may be omitted.*

## THE SERMON

*On most weekday services the sermon is omitted.*

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Please KNEEL or SIT. The prayers conclude with our saying together the Grace:*

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

(2 Corinthians 13.14)

*You are invited to STAND as the ministers depart, and to be seated after to listen to the*

*ORGAN VOLUNTARY*

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### The Collects

*The collects quite literally 'collect' the prayers of the congregation. Many were written by Thomas Cranmer, who studied in Cambridge before becoming Archbishop of Canterbury and creating the first Book of Common Prayer.*

### Anthem

*The Anthem gives us time to reflect and listen. Music opens us up to an emotional and physical experience of prayer, bringing us closer to those mysteries for which words alone seem inadequate.*

### Sermon

*The sermon offers an interpretation of a theme of the service, often drawing on the readings and sometimes in relation to the season or a topical issue.*

### Intercessions and Grace

*A minister prays for the church, the world, and our own needs, using prayers both traditional and contemporary.*