



CHURCH *of the* INCARNATION

The Seventeenth Sunday *after* Pentecost

October 5, 2025

Choral Evensong

ABOUT THIS SERVICE

The origins of Choral Evensong go back many centuries, and have their roots in the ancient patterns of monastic worship, which were based on the regular singing of all 150 psalms and the systematic reading of the Bible. Brief services, or offices, were said or sung throughout the day and night, in accordance with St. Paul's instruction to 'pray without ceasing', so that the whole of the daily routine of monks and nuns could be sanctified and offered to God. In the aftermath of the Reformation in England, the first *Book of Common Prayer* (published in 1549) combined elements from a number of the monastic offices to form the dual services of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, or Evensong. Each has as its central feature the recitation or singing of the Psalms; readings from Scripture; and prayers for the Church, the world, and those in need. Both services have fixed songs or canticles associated with them, including the *Magnificat* (the Song of Mary from St. Luke's Gospel) and the *Nunc dimittis* (the Song of Simeon from St. Luke's Gospel) at Evensong. This format was formalized in *The Book of Common Prayer 1662* and has remained largely unchanged ever since.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Leo Sowerby's 1919 setting of *Psalm 121* captures a sound world that is distinctly American. Infused with harmonies of jazz, the organ establishes a firm harmonic foundation while the choir seems to float above it. The work evokes the atmosphere of the nightclub and the expansive melodies of the great American crooners, yet transplants these elements into the sacred space of the church. In doing so, Sowerby creates a unique voice for the American expression of the English Choral Tradition.

The *Wells Service* by Malcolm Archer was written for the choir of Wells Cathedral, where Archer served as Director of Music. The canticles demonstrate his gift for lyrical melody and finely crafted choral textures.



Following this service, all are warmly invited to a reception in the Narthex.

Cover art: *Evensong* (depicting St. Cecilia, patron saint of musicians), John Melhuish Strudwick

SOLEMN EVENSONG

Organ Voluntary

Te lucis ante terminum, Op. 38, N° 5

Marcel Dupré (1886–1971)

All stand at the entrance of the procession. The Officiant reads one or more sentences of Scripture.

Invitatory

Craig Phillips (b. 1961)

Officiant O Lord, open thou our lips.

Choir And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

Officiant ✠ O God, make speed to save us.

Choir O Lord, make haste to help us.

Officiant 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.

Officiant Praise ye the Lord.

Choir The Lord's Name be praised.

All sit.

Psalm 145

Exaltabo te, Deus

Chant by Douglas Major (b. 1953)

I WILL magnify thee, O God, my King : and I will praise thy Name for ever and ever.

Every day will I give thanks unto thee : and praise thy Name for ever and ever.

Great is the LORD, and marvellous worthy to be praised : there is no end of his greatness.

One generation shall praise thy works unto another : and declare thy power.

As for me, I will be talking of thy worship : thy glory, thy praise, and wondrous works;

So that men shall speak of the might of thy marvellous acts : and I will also tell of thy greatness.

The memorial of thine abundant kindness shall be shewed : and men shall sing of thy righteousness.

The LORD is gracious, and merciful : long-suffering, and of great goodness.

The LORD is loving unto every man : and his mercy is over all his works.

All thy works praise thee, O LORD : and thy saints give thanks unto thee.

They shew the glory of thy kingdom : and talk of thy power;

That thy power, thy glory, and mightiness of thy kingdom : might be known unto men.

Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom : and thy dominion endureth throughout all ages.

The LORD upholdeth all such as fall : and lifteth up all those that are down.

The eyes of all wait upon thee, O Lord : and thou givest them their meat in due season.

Thou openest thine hand : and fillest all things living with plenteousness.

The LORD is righteous in all his ways : and holy in all his works.

The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him : yea, all such as call upon him faithfully.

He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him : he also will hear their cry, and will help them.

The LORD preserveth all them that love him : but scattereth abroad all the ungodly.

My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD :

and let all flesh give thanks unto his holy Name for ever and ever.

(psalm continued overleaf)

The People stand as the Choir sings

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.

All sit.

The First Lesson

2 Kings 20:1-21

IN those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover." Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, "Remember now, O LORD, I implore you, how I have walked before you in faithfulness with a whole heart and have done what is good in your sight." Hezekiah wept bitterly. Before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him, "Turn back and say to Hezekiah prince of my people: Thus says the LORD, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; indeed, I will heal you; on the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD. I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake." Then Isaiah said, "Bring a lump of figs. Let them take it and apply it to the boil, so that he may recover." Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD on the third day?" Isaiah said, "This is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he has promised: Shall the shadow advance ten intervals, or shall it retreat ten intervals?" Hezekiah answered, "It is normal for the shadow to lengthen ten intervals; rather, let the shadow retreat ten intervals." The prophet Isaiah cried to the LORD, and he brought the shadow back the ten intervals, by which the sun had declined on the dial of Ahaz. At that time King Merodach-baladan son of Baladan of Babylon sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. Hezekiah welcomed them; he showed them all his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his armory, all that was found in his storehouses; there was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah and said to him, "What did these men say? From where did they come to you?" Hezekiah answered, "They have come from a far country, from Babylon." He said, "What have they seen in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them." Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: Days are coming when all that is in your house and that which your ancestors have stored up until this day shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, says the LORD. Some of your own sons who are born to you shall be taken away; they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Why not, if there will be peace and security in my days?" The rest of the deeds of Hezekiah, all his power, how he made the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? Hezekiah slept with his ancestors, and his son Manasseh succeeded him.

All stand.

Magnificat

Wells Service

Malcolm Archer (b. 1952)

MY ✠ soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. 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 showed 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.

All sit.

The Second Lesson

Luke 7:11-17

SOON after healing the centurion's slave, Jesus went to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow, and with her was a large crowd from the town. When the Lord saw her, he was moved with compassion for her and said to her, "Do not cry." Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stopped. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, rise!" The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized all of them, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" This word about him spread throughout the whole of Judea and all the surrounding region.

All stand.

Nunc Dimittis

Wells Service

Malcolm Archer

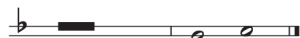
LORD, ✠ now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

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 Apostle's Creed

The People and Choir chant in unison

IBELIEVE 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.



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A - men.

The Prayers

Craig Phillips

Officiant The Lord be with you.
Choir And with thy spirit.

Officiant Let us pray.

All kneel as the Choir sings

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

The Lord's Prayer

OUR Father, who 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 those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Officiant O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.

Choir And grant us thy salvation.

Officiant O Lord, save the State.

Choir And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Officiant Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.

Choir And make thy chosen people joyful.

Officiant O Lord, save thy people.

Choir And bless thine inheritance.

Officiant Give peace in our time, O Lord.

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

Officiant O God, make clean our hearts within us.

Choir And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The Collect of the Day

ALmighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve: Pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy, forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and 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 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 Savior. 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 Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Anthem

Leo Sowerby (1895–1968)

I WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, he that keepeth thee will not slumber.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is thy keeper; thy shade upon thy right hand.
The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil, he shall preserve thy soul.
The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.
Amen.

Psalm 121

All kneel.

The General Thanksgiving

ALmighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The Officiant then says A Prayer of St. Chrysostom, saying

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise, that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests; Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

All stand.

The Dismissal

Officiant The Lord be with you.

Choir And with thy spirit.

Officiant Let us bless the Lord.

Choir Thanks be to God.

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

Choir Amen.

Hymn 456

O Love of God, how strong and true

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Sunday morning choral services: 9 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.

Podcasts of Evensong services are published weekly at incarnation.org/evensong



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