



CHURCH *of the* INCARNATION

The First Sunday *in* Lent

February 22, 2026

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

Between 1919 and 1975, English composer Herbert Howells penned twenty sets of the Anglican Church's Evensong canticles Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. He conceived most of them for specific English cathedrals, collegiate chapels and parish churches, but his last set, the only one for an American church, was for St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Dallas.

Dr. Larry Palmer, then organist and choirmaster at St. Luke's and longtime professor of organ and harpsichord at SMU, arranged the commission with Howells, and he conducted the premiere on October 19, 1975. For years, the *Dallas Canticles*, thus titled, were known mainly by their reputation for difficulty, although they increasingly are sung by choirs on both sides of the Atlantic and recognized as among Howells' finest. The Church of the Incarnation Choir performed them on a BBC Evensong broadcast subsequently expanded on a compact disc.

A product of Howells' 82nd year, the *Dallas Canticles* are in his somewhat edgier later style, the music restlessly shifting among meters, with tricky offbeat rhythms and busy counterpoints for both singers and organ. But, as always, vocal lines hit "hot spots" in each voice part at just the right moments, and there are still those chills-down-the-back moments that can only come from Howells.

- Note by Scott Cantrell, 2025



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
Preludio 'Sine Nomine'

Herbert Howells (1892–1983)

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

Invitatory

Humphrey Clucas (b. 1941)

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 103

Benedic, anima mea

Chants by G. H. Knight (1908–1979)
& Gerre Hancock (1934–2012)

PRAISE the LORD, O my soul : and all that is within me, praise his holy Name.
Praise the LORD, O my soul : and forget not all his benefits:
Who forgiveth all thy sin : and health all thine infirmities;
Who saveth thy life from destruction : and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness;
Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things : making thee young and lusty as an eagle.
The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment : for all them that are oppressed with wrong.
He showed his ways unto Moses : his works unto the children of Israel.
The LORD is full of compassion and mercy : long-suffering, and of great goodness.
He will not alway be chiding : neither keepeth he his anger for ever.
He hath not dealt with us after our sins : nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses.
For look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth :
so great is his mercy also toward them that fear him.
Look how wide also the east is from the west : so far hath he set our sins from us.
Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children : even so is the LORD merciful unto them that fear him.
For he knoweth whereof we are made : he remembereth that we are but dust.
The days of man are but as grass : for he flourisheth as a flower of the field.
For as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone : and the place thereof shall know it no more.
But the merciful goodness of the LORD endureth for ever and ever upon them that fear him :
and his righteousness upon children's children;
Even upon such as keep his covenant : and think upon his commandments to do them.
The LORD hath prepared his seat in heaven : and his kingdom ruleth over all.

(psalm continued overleaf)

O praise the LORD, ye angels of his, ye that excel in strength :
ye that fulfil his commandment, and hearken unto the voice of his word.
O praise the LORD, all ye his hosts : ye servants of his that do his pleasure.
O speak good of the LORD, all ye works of his, in all places of his dominion :
praise thou the LORD, O my soul.

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

Daniel 9:3–10

THEN I, Daniel, turned to the Lord God to seek an answer by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, “Ah, Lord, great and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love with those who love you and keep your commandments, we have sinned and done wrong, acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and ordinances. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land. Righteousness is on your side, O Lord, but open shame, as at this day, falls on us, the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them because of the treachery that they have committed against you. Open shame, O LORD, falls on us, our kings, our princes, and our ancestors because we have sinned against you. To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, but we have rebelled against him and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by following his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.”

All stand.

Magnificat

Dallas Service

Herbert Howells (1892–1983)

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

John 12:44-50

THEN Jesus cried aloud: "Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness. I do not judge anyone who hears my words and does not keep them, for I came not to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; on the last day the word that I have spoken will serve as judge, for I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I speak, therefore, I speak just as the Father has told me."

All stand.

Nunc Dimittis

Dallas Service

Herbert Howells

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.



... A - men.

The Prayers

Humphrey Clucas

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 God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted of Satan: Make speed to help thy servants who are assaulted by manifold temptations; and, as thou knowest their several infirmities, let each one find thee mighty to save; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Collect of Lent

ALmighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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 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 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

Orlando Lassus (1532–1594)

IMPROPERIUM expectavit cor meum, et miseriam:
et sustinui qui simul mecum contristaretur, et non
fuit: consolantem me quaesivi, et non inveni: et
dederunt in escam meam fel, et in siti mea potaverunt
me aceto.

*My heart anticipated reproach and misery; I looked
for someone to grieve with me and there was nobody.
I sought one to comfort me and did not find him; and
they gave me gall for food, and for my thirst made me
drink vinegar.*

Psalm 68

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 141

Wilt thou forgive that sin, where I begun

So giebst du nun



CHURCH *of the*
INCARNATION

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