



Choral Evensong

SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2026

5:00 P.M.



The Storm on the Sea of Galilee, 1633

REMBRANDT VAN RIJIN

Choral Evensong

It is an ancient tradition for the people of God to offer praise and prayer as the day draws to a close. Choral Evensong is a service of sung evening prayer. The text of the service is drawn almost entirely from the Bible, and the main purpose is to proclaim the wonderful works of God in human history, and in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Sung psalms and canticles are interwoven with readings from the Old and New Testaments and the recitation of the Apostles' Creed and Lord's Prayer. Other prayers and hymns are drawn from the many centuries of the Christian Church. The congregation is invited to listen reflectively and prayerfully as the choir and ministers offer prayer and praise on their behalf. Many find this frees them to offer to God their own thoughts and prayers.

GATHERING

The Opening Voluntary

"Rhapsody No. 1 in D-flat Major," Op. 17

Herbert Howells
1892-1983

The Welcome and Opening Prayer

Rev. Dr. Nancy Johnson

The Introit

"O Gladsome Light, O Grace"

LE CANTIQUE DE SIMÉON

O gladsome Light, O grace of God the Father's face, th'eternal splendor wearing;
celestial, holy, blest, our Savior Jesus Christ, joyful in thine appearing.
Now, ere day fadeth quite, we see the evening light, our wanted hymn outpouring;
Father of might unknown, thee, his incarnate Son, and Holy Spir't adoring.
To thee of right belongs all praise of holy songs, O Son of God, Lifegiver;
thee, therefore, O Most High, the world doth glorify, and shall exalt for ever.

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 173 "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"

RATISBON

**The Prayer of Confession*

Out of the depths we cry to God, in the darkness of our suffering and in our pain. Out of the depths God cries to us, asking us to repent, to return with our whole hearts, to admit our sin, and to accept forgiveness. Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

Merciful God, we confess that we often prefer the comfort of what we know to the truth you reveal. We judge by appearances, cling to assumptions, and resist the light that would change us. We turn away from those who see differently than we do. Forgive us, O God. Heal our blindness, soften our hearts, and lead us into the freedom of your truth.

All pray in silence.

Hear the good news: "Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light." In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven, restored, and called to walk in the light of God's love.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

Glory to God.

Amen.

All remain standing as the Minister and the Choir sing the Preces.

**The Preces*

Setting by Malcolm Archer

b. 1952

Minister O Lord, open thou our lips.

Choir *And our mouth shall show 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.*

All sit. The Choir sings.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

The Psalmody

Psalm 130

Chant by H. Walford Davies

1869-1941

Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice.
O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint.
If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it?
For there is mercy with thee; therefore shalt thou be feared.
If I look for the Lord; my soul doth wait for him; in his word is my trust.
My soul fleeth unto the Lord before the morning watch;
I say, before the morning watch.
O Israel, trust in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.
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 First Lesson

Job 38:1-11

Rev. Montana Hamby

The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind:
“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?
Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me.
“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
Tell me, if you have understanding.
Who determined its measurements—surely you know!
Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk,
or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together
and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?
“Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?—
when I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band,
and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors,
and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther,
and here shall your proud waves be stopped?’”

Minister The Word of God for the People of God.

All Thanks be to God.

The Canticle

Magnificat

Howells, *Collegium Regale*

The Magnificat is the Virgin Mary's song of thanksgiving in response to the fact that she will bear the Son of God, fulfilling the promises of the Old Testament.

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 shew'd 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 Gospel Lesson*

Mark 4:35-41

Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby

When evening had come, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Minister The Gospel of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

All sit.

The Canticle

Nunc Dimitis

Howells, *Collegium Regale*

The Nunc dimittis is the song of the aged Simeon, who had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. Upon taking the infant Jesus into his arms, Simeon utters these words of thanksgiving.

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*

**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 Spirit,
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead, and buried.
The third day he rose 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 Spirit;
The holy catholic Church;
The communion of saints;
The forgiveness of sins;
The resurrection of the body;
And the life everlasting.
Amen.**

THE PRAYERS

**The Lesser Litany*

Archer

Minister The Lord be with you.

Choir *And with thy spirit.*

Minister Let us pray.

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

**The Lord's Prayer*

Minister As our Savior taught us, so we pray:

**All Our Father, who 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 those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever.
Amen.**

All sit.

The Suffrages

Cantor O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.
Choir *And grant us thy salvation.*
Cantor O Lord, save the State.
Choir *And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.*
Cantor Endue thy ministers with righteousness.
Choir *And make thy chosen people joyful.*
Cantor O Lord, save thy people.
Choir *And bless thine inheritance.*
Cantor Give peace in our time, O Lord.
Choir *Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.*
Cantor O God, make clean our hearts within us.
Choir *And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.*

The Collects

Rev. Jeremy Lawson

A Collect for Lent

*A*lmighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

A Collect for Peace

*M*ost holy God, the source of all good desires, all right judgments, and all just works: Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, so that our minds may be fixed on the doing of your will, and that we, being delivered from the fear of all enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the mercies of Christ Jesus our Savior God, now and for ever.
Amen.

A Collect for Mission

Keeep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.
Amen.

The Anthem

"They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships"

Herbert Sumsion

1899-1995

They that go down to the sea in ships: and occupy their business in great waters;
these men see the works of the Lord: and his wonders in the deep.
For at his word the stormy wind ariseth: which lifteth up the waves thereof.
They are carried up to the heav'n, and down again to the deep;
their soul melteth away because of the trouble.
They reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man; and are at their wits' end.
So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble:
He deliv'reth them out of their distress.
For he maketh the storm to cease: so that the waves thereof are still.
Then are they glad because they are at rest:
and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

Psalms 107:23-30

The Silent Prayer

The congregation is invited to a time of silent prayer. All are welcome to come forward to the Altar for prayer and to light a candle.

*The votive candle stands are Given to the Glory of God
and in loving honor of Evelyn Winstead for 50 years of membership and volunteer service to
Athens First United Methodist Church by Rev. Dr. Bob Winstead.*

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

We praise and thank you, O God, for you are without beginning and without end. Through Christ, you created the whole world; through Christ, you preserve it. You made the day for the works of light and the night for the refreshment of our minds and bodies. Keep us now in Christ; grant us a peaceful evening, a night free from sin; and bring us to the eternal light of your morning, that we may be your light for the world. Through Christ and in the Holy Spirit, we offer you all glory, honor, and worship, now and for ever. Amen.

The Hymn of Response

UMH 700 "Abide with Me"

EVENTIDE

The Blessing

Minister As we depart, may the grace of Christ our Lord enfold you this night and always, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

All are invited to remain seated until the conclusion of the organ voluntary.

The Closing Voluntary

"Organ Sonata No. 3 in A Major," Op. 65

Felix Mendelssohn

Con moto maestoso

1809- 1847

Andante tranquillo

The first movement features the chorale melody "Aus tiefer not" (Out of the Depths) from Psalm 130 in the pedals of the organ.

Evensong Leadership

Ministers

Rev. Jeremy Lawson
Rev. Dr. Nancy Johnson
Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby
Rev. Montana Hamby

Music

Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship
Raina Wood, Organist

with Chamber Ensemble

Mack Alexander
Marianna Baccus
Sofia Castillo
Steven Dasher
Alejandra Ferguson
Alex Gilliam, *soloist*
Giavanni Jackson
Steven Jones
Andrew Latimer
Amy McCollum
Katie McCollum
Ross Rainey
Erin Towe, *cantor*
Audrey Vazquez, *soloist*
Callie Waller
Dellar Weldon

Join us on Sundays for Worship | 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

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ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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