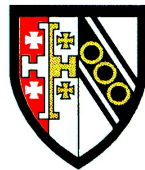


SELWYN COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE



THE ORDER FOR
CHORAL EVENSONG
ON SUNDAYS

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A brief introduction to Choral Evensong

Choral Evensong is a service (or 'Office') with its roots in ancient Christian monasticism and the sixteenth-century Reformation of the English Church. The service you will take part in this evening, taken from the seventeenth-century *Book of Common Prayer*, is sung in larger parish churches and cathedrals throughout the British Isles, and especially famously in the college chapels of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

Choral Evensong is an ancestral treasure that continues to refresh our human spirits today. Our College Chapel Choir can draw upon a rich inheritance of music, still being added to by contemporary composers in every style, composed for or appropriate to the Evening Office. In this time out of time, we can collect ourselves, quieten our hearts, allow the beauty of the language and the music to transport us, and hear God speaking to us through the readings and songs.

Within this hallowed space may we forget the ceaseless activity of daily life, and be still.

Evensong is a combination of the medieval Offices of Vespers (Evening Prayer) and Compline (Night Prayer). At Evensong:

- We prepare for worship by confessing our sins to Almighty God and receiving forgiveness in the Absolution
- We pray that God will help us to worship him.
- We sing Psalms and Hymns.
- We listen to readings from the Old and New Testaments.
- We hear the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc Dimittis*—two songs, taken from St Luke's Gospel, traditionally associated with Christian prayer in the later part of the day.
- We affirm our Christian faith, in the words of the ancient Baptismal Creed.
- At the end of the service, we listen to a reflection on the scriptural readings that we have heard, we pray for the needs of the Church and the world, and we ask God's blessing on the week to come.

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Michaelmas Term 2023

Please stand at the entry of the procession.

INTROIT *(sung by the Choir)*

The Choir begins the service with a short piece which reflects the themes of the season.

SENTENCE FROM SCRIPTURE AND INTRODUCTION

The Officiant begins the service with a seasonally-appropriate sentence from the Bible, and then invites us to ask God for forgiveness using one of the forms of words below.

Officiant 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:

OR Beloved, we are come together in the presence of Almighty God and of the whole company of heaven to offer unto him through our Lord Jesus Christ our worship and praise and thanksgiving; to make confession of our sins; to pray, as well for others as for ourselves, that we may know more truly the greatness of God's love and shew forth in our lives the fruits of his grace; and to ask on behalf of all men such things as their well-being doth require. Wherefore let us kneel in silence, and remember God's presence with us now.

OR Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

Please sit or kneel, as you are able.

GENERAL CONFESSION *(please feel free to join in, or just to listen)*

Officiant Almighty and most merciful Father,

All **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.**

ABSOLUTION

The Officiant forgives us on God's behalf. In their ordination, Christian priests are given the sacramental authority to forgive the sins of the people.

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who desireth not the death of a sinner,
but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live;
and hath given power, and commandment, to his Ministers,
to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent,
the Absolution and Remission of their sins:
He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent,
and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.
Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance,
and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him,
which we do at this present; and that the rest of our life hereafter
may be pure, and holy; so that at the last we may come
to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OR
May the Almighty and merciful Lord,
grant unto you pardon and remission of all your sins,
time for amendment of life,
and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

This is the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray. It appears twice in the order of Evensong, once said by everyone together, and later sung by the Choir on its own.

Officiant Our Father

All **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.**

Please stand.

THE PRECES (*"The Petitions" or Prayers*)

The Choir and Officiant begin the service with the opening responses, the ancient form of prayer which is rooted in the pre-Christian worship of the Jewish Temple.

O Lord, open thou our lips :
and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us :
O Lord, make haste to help us.

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.

Praise ye the Lord :
The Lord's name be praised.

PSALM

The Psalms, an anthology of Hebrew religious hymns and poems, are central to the Jewish and Christian traditions, and they are sung at Evensong every day. In the Christian tradition, the final two lines 'Glory be to the Father' are added at the end. It is customary to stand for the singing of the Psalm.

Please sit after the Psalm.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

There are two readings, (called "lessons") from the Bible at Evensong, the first is from the Old Testament (the Jewish Scripture).

Please stand.

OFFICE HYMN

We sing a hymn together. Please feel free to join in, or just to listen.

THE MAGNIFICAT *(sung by the Choir)*

The Magnificat is one of two Canticles ("little songs") at Evensong. It is the song that the Virgin Mary sang when she was pregnant with Jesus, in response to her cousin Elizabeth's praising of Mary's faith. The words are from the Gospel of St Luke, and in it, Mary reflects on the way in which God subverts the normal order of society by choosing her, a young, unmarried woman, to bear his son. In the Anglican tradition, of which Selwyn is a part, it is customary to stand for the singing of the canticles.

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 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 LESSON

The second lesson comes from the New Testament, the part of the Bible which recounts the life of Christ, and that of the early Christian Church.

Please stand.

NUNC DIMITTIS *(sung by the Choir)*

The second Canticle is the song sung by the prophet Simeon when the infant Jesus was presented to him in the Temple. Simeon was assured that he would not die until he had seen the salvation which God promises throughout the Old Testament. The story is told in the Gospel of St Luke.

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 remain standing and turn to face East (towards the altar). At every Evensong we profess the faith of the Church, called the Creed (from Credo, Latin for "I believe"). You can join in if you like, or simply listen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Officiant I believe in God:
All **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.**

Turn to face centre.

LESSER LITANY AND RESPONSES

Here the Officiant and the Choir pray on behalf of the whole community. This provides an opportunity for stillness and contemplation, much needed at the end of a busy day.

The Lord be with you :
And with thy spirit.
Let us pray.

Please sit or kneel.

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

The Choir sings the Lord's 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. Amen.

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us :
And grant us thy salvation.

O Lord, save the King :
And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness :
And make thy chosen people joyful.

O Lord, save thy people :
And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord :
Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.

O God, make clean our hearts within us :
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

(1) The Collect (Prayer) for the Day

Archbishop Cranmer wrote or translated most of these beautiful prayers for the Book of Common Prayer. The Choir responds 'Amen' to each. In Advent and Lent there is a special seasonal fourth Collect as well.

(2) 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.

(3) 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 *(sung by the Choir)*

The choir sings a piece of music which reflects the season of the church year, the scripture readings, and the themes of the day.

SERMON

On Sundays, the sermon is usually given by a visiting preacher, often as part of a termly themed sermon series.

PRAYERS

We pray for the world and the community. We remember the sick and those in need, and we pray for peace for the departed. Sometimes these responses are used as part of the prayers:

Lord, in thy mercy:	Hear our prayer.
Lord, hear us:	Lord, graciously hear us.

We then say the Grace together:

**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.**

Please stand.

HYMN

We sing a hymn. Please feel free to join in, or just to listen.

THE BLESSING

*The Dean of Chapel blesses us all. At the end, we respond with **Amen**.*

THE DISMISSAL *(sung by the Choir)*

The Lord be with you:
And with thy spirit.

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please remain standing as the Choir and clergy process out.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

You are welcome to stay and listen to the organ, which was built in 2004 by the renowned Québec firm, Orgues Létourneau Ltée. Sometimes the voluntary is played on the three-stop Kenneth Tickell chamber organ, which was given to the college in 2010. You are also welcome to leave during the voluntary; if you do, please do so quietly to avoid disturbing those who would like to listen or pray.

The College Prayer

O LORD, Who art the Resurrection and the Life of them that believe;
Who art ever to be praised, both in the living and the dead;
Who, for the edifying of Thy Church, didst vouchsafe
to enrich Thy servant, GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN,
with Thy manifold gifts of grace; assist us mercifully, O Lord,
in all our endeavours, to commemorate worthily,
the name and labours of our fellow-servant,
by building a House of piety and learning in his memory;
and grant that all they who serve Thee here,
may be taught by his example to serve in their several callings
to the honour of Thy Name, to the edifying of Thy Church,
and to the in-gathering of all to Thy fold;
Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost,
One God world without end.
Amen.

The Collect for St Etheldreda, on whose feast day the chapel was dedicated in 1895

Eternal God, who bestowed such grace
upon Thy servant ETHELDREDA
that she gave herself wholly unto the life of prayer,
and to the service of Thy true religion:
grant that, like her, we may so live our lives on earth
seeking Thy kingdom, that by Thy guiding
we may be joined to the glorious fellowship of Thy saints;
through Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord,
who livest and reignest with Thee,
in the unity of the Holy Ghost,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.