



CHORAL EVENSONG

for the
Eve of Ascension Day

May 13th, 2026
6:00 PM



THE CHURCH OF
THE HOLY TRINITY
RITTENHOUSE SQUARE

ABOUT EVENSONG

Evensong is a sung evening service in the Anglican tradition, defined in its current usage during the Reformation. The word 'Evensong' was first documented as 'oefen-sang' c. 1000 to describe Vespers, the seventh of the eight daily offices practiced in Roman Catholic monasteries, which traditionally occurs at sunset or around 6pm. The modern Evensong service was created by Thomas Cranmer, the author of the first Book of Common Prayer in 1549. Cranmer combined the two monastic evening services of Vespers (Evening Prayer) and Compline (Night Prayer) into one liturgy, using both the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* canticles as the heart of the service

Choral Evensong has been practiced in cathedrals, collegiate chapels, and parish churches for 450 years and is constructed from texts that are from the Bible or the Book of Common Prayer. Readings from the Old and New Testaments along with Psalms, Canticles, Hymns, and ancient prayers are woven together into a peaceful meditation as the choir and clergy exchange a sung dialogue of prayer.



PRELUDE

Nimrod (Enigma Variations)

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

INTROIT

God is Ascended

Richard Lloyd
(1933-2021)

God is ascended up on high,
With merry noise of trumpet's sound,
Set at the Father's own right hand,
Sovran of sky, and sea, and land,
Now Christ hath vanquished every foe,
Benedicamus Domino,
To Holy Trinity give praise,
With Deo gracias always.
Alleluia.

The People rise in body or in spirit at the entrance of the choir and clergy.

WELCOME

OPENING SENTENCES

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth stand in awe of him. *Psalm 96:9*

Thine is the day, O God, thine also the night; thou hast established the moon and the sun. Thou hast fixed all the boundaries of the earth; thou hast made summer and winter. *Psalm 74:15,16*

Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. *Hebrews 9:24*

THE INVITATORY & PSALTER

PRECES

*In a setting by Kenneth Leighton
(1929-1988)*

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.

1 O Trin - i - ty of bless - ed light, O U - ni -
 2 To thee our morn - ing song of praise, to thee our
 3 To God the Fa - ther, heaven - ly Light, to Christ re -

ty of prince - ly might, the fier - y sun now
 eve - ning prayer we raise; O grant us with thy
 vealed in earth - ly night, to God the Ho - ly

goes his way; shed thou with - in our hearts thy ray.
 saints on high to praise thee through e - ter - ni - ty.
 Ghost we raise our e - qual and un - ceas - ing praise.

Please be seated for the Psalm.

- 1 The LORD is King; he has put on splendid apparel; *
the LORD has put on his apparel and girded himself with strength.
- 2 He has made the whole world so sure *
that it cannot be moved;
- 3 Ever since the world began, your throne has been established; *
you are from everlasting.
- 4 The waters have lifted up, O LORD, the waters have lifted up their voice; *
the waters have lifted up their pounding waves.
- 5 Mightier than the sound of many waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea, *
mightier is the LORD who dwells on high.
- 6 Your testimonies are very sure, *
and holiness adorns your house, O LORD, for ever and for evermore.

All rise in body or in spirit for the Gloria Patri.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,*
and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning, is now,*
and will be for ever. Amen.

Please be seated for the readings.

THE LESSONS

READING Ephesians 1:15-23

Gail Caruso

Lector A Reading from the letter to the Ephesians

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Lector The word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Please rise in body or in spirit.

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.

Please be seated.

Lector A Reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus said to his disciples, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you~ that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Lector The Word of the Lord

All **Thanks be to God.**

Please rise in body or in spirit.

CANTICLE *Nunc Dimittis*

Kelly

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

Following the Canticle, all chant the Creed together on a single note.

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.

THE PRAYERS

SALUTATION & LESSER LITANY

Leighton

Officiant The Lord be with you.

Choir And with thy spirit.

Officiant Let us pray.

All may kneel or sit.

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

Officiant Our Father,

Choir 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 them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

SUFFRAGES

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.

Then follows three Collects.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Officiant O Almighty God, whose blessed Son our Savior Jesus Christ ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things: Mercifully give us faith to perceive that, according to his promise, he abideth with his Church on earth, even unto the end of the ages; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting.

Choir Amen.

COLLECT FOR PROTECTION

Officiant O God, who art the life of all who live, the light of the faithful, the strength of those who labor, and the repose of the dead: We thank thee for the timely blessings of the day, and humbly beseech thy merciful protection all the night. Bring us, we pray thee, in safety to the morning hours; through him who died for us and rose again, thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ.

Choir Amen.

COLLECT FOR THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Officiant Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know thee as thou art revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of thy love.

Choir Amen.

Please be seated.

THE HOMILY

ANTHEM

O Clap Your Hands

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.
For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.
God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.
For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.
God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.
Psalm 47:1-2,5-8

Following the anthem, please kneel or remain seated for the Prayers.

PRAYERS

Officiant Today, Jesus, we are faced with a wonderful truth to proclaim,
But also, an awesome and uncomfortable responsibility.
We praise you and celebrate you as ascended lord;
We recognize that you have authority over all things,
But we live in a world where greed and power and violence
Seem to be in control.

And so, as you call us, we pray:

People **Come as lord, Jesus, and set the world to rights.**

Officiant We praise you and celebrate you as the way, truth, and life;
We recognize that in you our life is made whole and full;
But we live in a world where death, brokenness, and need
appear to be everywhere.

And so, as you call us, we pray:

People **Come as lord, Jesus, and set the world to rights.**

Officiant We praise you and celebrate you as God among us;
We receive your invitation to live God's dream;
But we live in a world where dreams and hearts
are broken daily, and hope seems all but lost.

And so, as you call us, we pray:

People **Come as lord, Jesus, and set the world to rights.**

THE GENERAL THANKSGIVING

Officiant Almighty God, Father of all mercies,

All we thine unworthy servants
do give thee most humble and hearty thanks
for all thy goodness and loving-kindness
to us and to all whom thou hast made.
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.

A PRAYER OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM

Officiant Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication unto thee; and hast promised through thy well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name thou wilt be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting.

All Amen.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

DIMISSION

Cantor or Officiant

Let us bless the Lord, al-le-lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

People

Thanks be to God, al-le-lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

GRACE

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.

All Amen.

HYMN 215

In Babilone



1 See the Con - queror mounts in tri - umph; see the King in
 2 He who on the cross did suf - fer, he who from the
 3 Thou hast raised our hu - man na - ture on the clouds to



roy - al state, rid - ing on the clouds, his
 grave a - rose, he has van - quished sin and
 God's right hand: there we sit in heaven - ly



char - iot, to his heaven - ly pal - ace gate!
 Sa - tan; he by death has spoiled his foes.
 plac - es, there with thee in glo - ry stand.



Hark! the choirs of an - gel voic - es joy - ful
 While he lifts his hands in bless - ing, he is
 Je - sus reigns, a - dored by an - gels; Man with



al - le - lu - ias sing, and the por - tals
 part - ed from his friends; while their ea - ger
 God is on the throne; might - y Lord, in



high are lift - ed to re - ceive their heaven - ly King.
 eyes be - hold him, he up - on the clouds a - scends.
 thine as - cen - sion, we by faith be - hold our own.

Words: Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885), alt. Music: *In Babilone*, melody from *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradanseu*, 1710; harm. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944).

*Please remain as you are, while the clergy and choir depart.
 You are invited to be seated for the Postlude.*

POSTLUDE

Deo gracias

Gerald Near
 (b. 1942)

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PARTICIPANTS THIS EVENING

Officiant and Preacher

The Rev. Rachel Wenner Gardner

Lectors

Gail Caruso & Margaret Dowling

Organists

Wesley Parrott & Benjamin Leiby

Choir

Brendan Barker, Gail Caruso, Patricia Conrad, Stephanie DeMane, Will Dowling, Samuel Evans,
Franny Geller, Andrew Gutknecht, Justine Hansen, Samuel Keeler, Alex Mathews,
John Miles, Aimee Pilgermeyer, Jordan Rock, Eddie Rubeiz, Jenifer Smith, Maiya Williams

Church of the Holy Trinity Staff

The Rev. Rachel Wenner Gardner, *Rector*

The Rev. John Gardner, *Rector*

Benjamin Leiby, *Organist-Choirmaster*

Robyn Schnieders, *Director of Operations & Outreach*

Inaara Neal-Shiraz, *Director of Advancement*

Demetrius Swinson, *Operations Coordinator*

Chiquita Anderson, *Administrative Coordinator*

Mike Whitney & Shizawn Futch, *Operations Support*

Victoria Alfred-Levow & Chiquita Anderson, *Welcome Team*

Jack Baranoski, Boyden Gardner & Jonah Shortall, *Streaming Services*

Jack Baranoski & Travis Oliver, *Event Coordinators*

Dr. Stephen Framil, *Musician-in-Residence*

Dr. John French, *Organist-Choirmaster emeritus*

The Choir of Holy Trinity

Aimee Pilgermayer, Gail Caruso, Stephanie DeMane, Franny Geller, Patricia Conrad, Maiya Williams, Justine Hansen, Eddie Rubeiz, Samuel Evans, Samuel Keeler, Andrew Gutknecht, Thomas Kneeland, Alex Mathews, William Dowling, John Miles

Church of the Holy Trinity, Vestry

Esha Bhatia, Brian Conroy, Alicia Depler, Phillip Duffy, Alyssa Force, Monica Heuer, Susan Leidy, Jeff McEldowney, Rob Robinson, Ali Shott, Daniel Tancredi

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