

ST. FRANCIS IN THE FIELDS EPISCOPAL CHURCH



CHORAL EVENSONG

The Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 10, 2026

5:00 p.m.

The Rev. Nathan Dearen, *Officiant*
The Parish Choir of St. Francis in the Fields
Mr. James O'Donnell, *Guest Conductor*
Dr. Kirk M. Rich, *Director of Music*
Dr. Jeffrey Smith, *Artist-in-Residence*

WELCOME TO ST. FRANCIS IN THE FIELDS

We invite you to join us as active participants in the same worship that Anglicans have been celebrating for centuries. Our service is drawn from the riches of the Anglican tradition. Children of all ages are welcome in our worship services today.

What is Evensong? Evensong is a tiny fragment of something else: it is part of the worship that is offered to God by Christian people every hour of the day and night, in every part of the world. When you come to Evensong, it is as if you were dropping in on a conversation already in progress – a conversation between God and his people that began long before you were born and that will continue long after you die. Do not be disturbed if there are some things you do not understand right away. For a brief moment, you step into the continual stream of worship that is being offered today and that will be offered even unto the end of time. You are one with those who worship here on earth and in heaven. *-The Rev. Canon J. W. Poole*

Why celebrate Evensong? Evensong offers us the opportunity to gather and spend time in prayer while listening and participating in music that is especially selected to bring us into deeper understanding of the mysteries of our faith.

What should I expect at Evensong? Hymns, readings, Anglican chant, and anthems sung by the choir.

Why does the choir sing so much at Evensong? In Choral Evensong, the choir sings on behalf of the congregation. The settings of the Canticles of Mary (*Magnificat*) and Simeon (*Nunc dimittis*) have, by tradition, been sung by the choir alone. The Suffrages (prayers) and the Responses between the Officiant and congregation are also sung on behalf of the people. This allows the congregation time to meditate and enter into deeper prayer through word and music.

What does the congregation do at Evensong? The congregation joins in the singing of hymns, the Apostle's Creed, and other prayers. Additionally, the people are invited to join in silent meditation as the choir sings the various prayers, psalms, and canticles.

What is a canticle? A canticle (from the Latin *canticulum*, a diminutive of *canticum*, meaning "song") is a hymn (strictly excluding the Psalms) taken from the Bible.

Why do the prayers sound old-fashioned? Much of the English of the service is the language spoken and written by our ancestors more than four hundred years ago. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer's English translations of the ancient Latin and Sarum rites for the Daily Office were first published in 1549. Along with the King James Bible and the works of Shakespeare, Cranmer's texts could be said to form part of the DNA of the English language. It may sound old-fashioned, but its meaning is not out of date.

All stand for

The Procession

The Officiant reads

The Opening Sentences

The LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him. -*Habakkuk 2:20*

All kneel as the Officiant says

A General Confession

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 cloak them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with a 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 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:

All say together

Almighty and most merciful Father; **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 those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent; According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus 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.***

The Officiant says

The Declaration of Absolution

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant us absolution and remission of all our sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

THE INVITATORY AND PSALTER

All stand as the Choir sings

The Preces and Responses

setting: G. Hancock

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.

Candles are lit as all sing

The Phos Hilaron "O Gracious Light" setting: David Hogan (1949–1996)

O gracious light, pure brightness of the everlasting One,
 O Jesus Christ, most holy and blessed!
 Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
 And our eyes behold the vesper light,
 We sing thy praises, O God:
 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 Thou art worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
 O Son of God, O Giver of Life,
 And to be glorified through all the worlds. Amen.

Words: *Greek, 3rd century, tr. F. Bland Tucker (1895–1984)*

All sit while the Choir sings

Psalm 139:1-18, 23-24 *Domine, probasti* Highmore Skeats, Jr. (1787–1835)

O Lord, thou hast searched me out and known me :
 thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising,
 thou understandest my thoughts long before.
 Thou art about my path, and about my bed :
 and spiest out all my ways.
 For lo, there is not a word in my tongue :
 but thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether.
 Thou hast fashioned me behind and before :
 and laid thine hand upon me.
 Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me :
 I cannot attain unto it.
 Whither shall I go then from thy Spirit :
 or whither shall I go then from thy presence?
 If I climb up into heaven, thou art there :
 if I go down to hell, thou art there also.
 If I take the wings of the morning :
 and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea;
 Even there also shall thy hand lead me :
 and thy right hand shall hold me.
 If I say, Peradventure the darkness shall cover me :

then shall my night be turned to day.
Yea, the darkness is no darkness with thee, but the night is as clear as the day :
the darkness and light to thee are both alike.
For my reins are thine :
thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.
I will give thanks unto thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made :
marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.
My bones are not hid from thee :
though I be made secretly, and fashioned beneath in the earth.
Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect :
and in thy book were all my members written;
Which day by day were fashioned :
when as yet there was none of them.
How dear are thy counsels unto me, O God :
O how great is the sum of them!
If I tell them, they are more in number than the sand :
when I wake up I am present with thee.
Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart :
prove me, and examine my thoughts.
Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me :
and lead me in the way everlasting.

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 LESSONS

The First Lesson

Isaiah 49:8-10, 13-17

Lector A lesson from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.

Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have

graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

Lector Here endeth the lesson.

All stand as the Choir sings

The Magnificat

setting: *St. Paul's 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. *-Luke 1:46-55*

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 for

The Second Lesson

Romans 8:18–27

Lector A lesson from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not

only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Lector Here endeth the lesson.

All stand as the Choir sings

The Nunc Dimittis

setting: *St. Paul's Service*
H. 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. *-Luke 2:29-32*

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 sing in unison

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 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

The Choir sings

The Preces and Responses

setting: G. Hancock

Officiant The Lord be with you.

Choir **And with thy spirit.**

Officiant Let us pray.

All kneel

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

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

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.

THE 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.

The Collect of the Day

O God, who hast prepared for those who love thee such good things as pass man's understanding: Pour into our hearts such love toward thee, that we, loving thee in all things and above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **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 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 Savior. **Amen.**

The Collect for Aid against 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.**

All sit as the Choir sings

The Anthem after the Third Collect

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924)

For, lo, I raise up that bitter and hasty nation, which march through the breadth of the earth to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves. Their horses also are swifter than leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves. And their horsemen spread themselves, yea, their horsemen come from far. They fly as an eagle that hasteth to devour, they come all of them for violence; their faces are set as the east-wind, and they gather captives as the sand. Yea, he scoffeth at kings, and princes are a derision unto him. For he heapeth up dust and taketh it. Then shall he sweep by as a wind that shall pass over, and be guilty, even he, whose might is his God.

Art not thou from everlasting, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained him for judgment, and thou, O Rock, hast established him for correction.

I will stand upon my watch and set me upon the tower, and look forth to see what he will say to me, and what I shall answer concerning my complaint. And the Lord answered me and said: The vision is yet for the appointed time, and it hasteth toward the end, and shall not lie, though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come.

For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.

Words: *Habakkuk 1:6-12; 2:1-3, 14, 20*

All kneel as the Officiant says

A Prayer for Mission

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

All say together

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.**

All stand as the Officiant says

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

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. **Amen.**

The Concluding Versicle and Response

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.

The Officiant says

The Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. **Amen.** -II Corinthians 13:14

All stand to sing

The Closing Hymn "Love divine, all loves excelling"

Blaenwern

setting: James O'Donnell (b. 1961)

1. Love Di - vine, all loves_ ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n to earth_ come down,
2. Come, al - migh - ty to_ de - li - ver, Let us all thy life_ re - ceive;
3. Fin - ish then, thy new_ cre - a - tion; Pure and spot - less let_ us be:

Fix in us thy hum - ble dwel - ling, All thy faith - ful mer - cies crown.
Sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er - more_ thy tem - ples leave.
Let us see thy great_ sal - va - tion Per - fect - ly_ re - stored in thee:

Je - su, thou art all_ com - pas - sion, Pure un - bound - ed love_ thou art;
Thee, we would be al - way bles - sing, Serve thee as_ thy hosts_ a - bove,
Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, Till in heav'n we take_ our place,

Vi - sit us with thy_ sal - va - tion, En - ter ev' - ry trem - bling heart.
Pray, and praise thee with - out ceas - ing, Glo - ry in_ thy per - fect love.
Till we cast our crowns be - fore thee, Lost in won - der, love, and praise.

The Retiring Procession Postlude in C

Henry Smart (1813–1879)

All remain standing as the choir and clergy depart.

Those who wish may sit for the remainder of the organ voluntary.

A freewill offering benefiting the parish music ministry may be left in the basket at the entrance to the nave.

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