

Choral Evensong

Sunday 5th October, 2025

16th Sunday after Trinity



Welcome to this service of Choral Evensong, led by the Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry. The Reverend Su McClellan, Cathedral Associate Minister, is preaching.

The Choir is directed by Rachel Mahon, Director of Music. The organists are Liam Condon, Assistant Director of Music, and Adam Heron, Organ Scholar.

The responses are those by John Bertalot (1931-).

Introit

Holy is the true light, and passing wonderful, lending radiance to them that endured in the heat of the conflict: from Christ they inherit a home of unfading splendour, wherein they rejoice with gladness evermore. Alleluia.

*Words from the Salisbury Diurnal as translated by Dr G.H. Palmer (1846-1926)
Music by Sir William Harris (1883-1973)*

Psalm 142

1. I cried unto the Lord with my voice ♦
yea, even unto the Lord did I make my supplication.
2. I poured out my complaints before him ♦
and shewed him of my trouble.
3. When my spirit was in heaviness thou knewest my path ♦
in the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.
4. I looked also upon my right hand ♦
and saw there was no man that would know me.
5. I had no place to flee unto ♦
and no man cared for my soul.
6. I cried unto thee, O Lord, and said ♦
Thou art my hope, and my portion in the land of the living.
7. Consider my complaint ♦
for I am brought very low.

8. O deliver me from my persecutors ♦
for they are too strong for me.

9. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks unto thy Name ♦
which thing if thou wilt grant me, then shall the righteous resort unto
my company.

The First Lesson

¹Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish kin. ²For there were those who said, "With our sons and our daughters, we are many; we must get grain, so that we may eat and stay alive." ³There were also those who said, "We are having to pledge our fields, our vineyards, and our houses in order to get grain during the famine." ⁴And there were those who said, "We are having to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay the king's tax." ⁵Now our flesh is the same as that of our kindred; our children are the same as their children; and yet we are forcing our sons and daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have been ravished; we are powerless, and our fields and vineyards now belong to others."

⁶I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these complaints.

⁷After thinking it over, I brought charges against the nobles and the officials; I said to them, "You are all taking interest from your own people." And I called a great assembly to deal with them, ⁸and said to them, "As far as we were able, we have bought back our Jewish kindred who had been sold to other nations; but now you are selling your own kin, who must then be bought back by us!" They were silent, and could not find a word to say. ⁹So I said, "The thing that you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God, to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?" ¹⁰Moreover I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let us stop this taking of interest. ¹¹Restore to them, this very day, their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the interest on money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from them." ¹²Then they said, "We will restore everything and demand nothing more from them. We will do as you say." And I called the priests, and made them take an oath to do as they had promised. ¹³I also shook out the fold of my garment and said, "So may God shake out everyone from house and from property who does not perform

this promise. Thus may they be shaken out and emptied.” And all the assembly said, “Amen,” and praised the LORD. And the people did as they had promised.

Nehemiah 5:1-13

The Magnificat

Magnificat in A Minor by William H. Harris (1883 – 1973)

The Second Lesson

¹ As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ ³Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’ ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷saying to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’ (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, ‘Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?’ ⁹Some were saying, ‘It is he.’ Others were saying, ‘No, but it is someone like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’ ¹⁰But they kept asking him, ‘Then how were your eyes opened?’ ¹¹He answered, ‘The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, “Go to Siloam and wash.” Then I went and washed and received my sight.’ ¹²They said to him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I do not know.’ ¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, ‘He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.’ ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, ‘This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.’ But others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?’ And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, ‘What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.’ He said, ‘He is a prophet.’ ¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his

sight ¹⁹and asked them, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' ²⁰His parents answered, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.' ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, 'Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.' ²⁵He answered, 'I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.' ²⁶They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' ²⁷He answered them, 'I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?' ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, 'You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' ³⁰The man answered, 'Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.' ³⁴They answered him, 'You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?' And they drove him out. ³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' ³⁶He answered, 'And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.' ³⁷Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' ³⁸He said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshipped him. ³⁹Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.' ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, 'Surely we are not blind, are we?' ⁴¹Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, "We see", your sin remains.

John 9

The Nunc Dimittis

Nunc Dimittis in A Minor by William H. Harris (1883 – 1973)

The Collect of the Day

O Lord, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Anthem

O for a closer walk with God,
a calm and heavenly frame;
a light to shine upon the road
that leads me to the Lamb!

Return, O holy dove, return,
sweet messenger of rest:
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
and drove thee from my breast.

So shall my walk be close with God,
calm and serene my frame;
so purer light shall mark the road
that leads me to the Lamb.

Words by William Cowper (1731-1800)

Music by C.V. Stanford (1852-1924)

The Hymn

**Saviour, again to thy dear name we raise
with one accord our parting hymn of praise;
we stand to bless thee ere our worship cease;
then, lowly kneeling wait thy word of peace.**

**Grant us thy peace upon our homeward way;
with thee began, with thee shall end, the day:
guard thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
that in this house have called upon thy name.**

**Grant us thy peace, Lord, through the coming night;
turn thou for us its darkness into light;
from harm and danger keep thy children free,
for dark and light are both alike to thee.**

**Grant us thy peace throughout our earthly life,
our balm in sorrow, and our stay in strife;
then, when thy voice shall bid our conflict cease,
call us, O Lord, to thine eternal peace.**

Words by E. J. Hopkins (1818-1901)

Tune CP 20 Ellers John Ellerton (1826-1893)

Voluntary

As we mark the beginning of Black History Month, please do stay for the organ voluntary, played by Liam Condon.

Toccato from Suite No 1 for Organ by Florence Beatrice Price (1887-1953)

*If you would like to make **a one-off donation** to the Cathedral via your phone, or set up a recurring donation, please use the QR code below. There are also contactless donation points and collection boxes near the entrance.*

Thank you for your support.



DAILY SERVICES AT THE CATHEDRAL

Regular services at the Cathedral follow this pattern. For special services and up-to-date information about one-off cancellations of the services below, please check the calendar on the Cathedral website:

<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/full-calendar>

Monday - Friday

8:30 – 9:00am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

(followed on Thursdays by BCP Holy Communion)

4 – 4:30pm: *Evening Prayer*

(or Wednesday and Thursday during school terms: Choral Evensong, 5:15 - 6pm)

Saturday

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

Sunday

10:30 – 11:45am: *The Cathedral Eucharist*

4 – 5pm: *BCP Evening Prayer (Choral Evensong during term time)*

JOINING OUR CHOIRS

Do you know a child who loves to sing? Boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 10 are welcome to audition for the Cathedral Boys' and Girls' Choirs. They sing an average of four times per week during term time in recordings, services and concerts. Children receive a world-class music education completely free and even receive scholarship payments. Please get in touch with the Director of Music to learn more:
rachel.mahon@coventrycathedral.org.uk

CLERGY PREACHING AWAY:

Reverend Su McClellan – Saint Chad's, Wood End

Reverend Sacha Slavic – Saint James', Ansty

SAFEGUARDING AT COVENTRY CATHEDRAL

We are committed to the safeguarding of all people. For details, please visit www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding

You can report a concern using the same link or by contacting Jane Williams, Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, calling 024 7650 2349 or by emailing janeMLWill@aol.com

Alternatively, you can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team led by Sarah Price: 024 7652 1345 or safeguarding@coventry.anglican.org

DEAN JOHN'S RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

After many years of faithful and dedicated ministry, Dean John Witcombe has announced his retirement in May 2026. We are deeply grateful for his leadership and ministry among us, and we look forward to marking this significant moment together.

Please make a note of these two important dates:

- ***Saturday, 9 May 2026 – Farewell Celebration***
- ***Sunday, 17 May 2026 – Dean John's Farewell Service***

A full statement about the retirement can be found on the Cathedral website: www.coventrycathedral.org.uk

Do keep these dates free in your diaries so that, as a community, we may come together to give thanks and celebrate Dean John's ministry and to wish him well for the future.

COMING SOON

“We Have Forgotten That We Belong to One Another...”:

A Vigil for Israel and Palestine

Tuesday, 7th October, 7:30pm

There will be a vigil in Coventry Cathedral to mark the anniversary of 7th October and all that has happened since. This will be at 7:30pm on Tuesday 7th October. As well as collective prayers, there will be an opportunity to visit five prayer stations around the Cathedral to pray, lament and reflect on the part we can play in peace-building and reconciliation.

Pathways to the Past: Stories from Coventry and Warwickshire

Saturday, 11th October, 4.00pm

Join *Rewind*, a history initiative based at the University of Warwick dedicated to making history engaging and accessible, for an interactive evening of film, stories, and discussion about local history and heritage!

We'll showcase some of the work *Rewind* has done so far and invite you to share your own stories and perspectives. Together, we'll explore what it means to be a Coventrian or Warwickshire resident in the twenty-first century – and how local history connects us to the past.

Book your FREE place via the Cathedral website.

Safeguarding Sunday

Sunday, 12th October

Safeguarding Sunday will be observed at the Cathedral on Sunday 12th September. Following the 10.30am service, there will be a brief 30-45 minute training session open to all members of the congregation in the John Laing Centre. It will be an opportunity to meet members of our safeguarding team and to hear about what you can do if you have a safeguarding concern. Cake will be provided!

Service for Baby Loss Awareness Week

Sunday, 12th October, 2.00pm

A service hosted by a network of local charities, bereavement midwives and chaplains for anyone who has ever experienced the loss of a baby, at any age or gestation, for any reason, whether the loss was recent or long ago. This is a beautiful, informal service, with opportunity to light candles, play pooh sticks, and draw chalk hearts on the floor of the Cathedral ruins. There will be music, reflection and a talk by Alicia Burnett, a midwife with her own experience of baby loss, who founded Black baby loss awareness week in 2023. And there will be tea and cake, and chance to talk with others if you want. All are welcome, children too.

Coffee Morning

Wednesday, 15th October, 10am - 12noon

Come and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of the Cathedral, with FREE refreshments.

An opportunity to gather, chat with friends and friends unknown, to help us fulfil our core value of Hospitality.

Any questions, please email events@coventrycathedral.org.uk

Reconciliation in a Time of Conflict

Saturday, 18th October, 10am – 3.30pm

How can we talk about reconciliation in the midst of war? We know the

Bible calls us to be reconcilers, but what does the Christian ministry of reconciliation look like in a time of conflict? What are the challenges faced by those in the context of war, and what might we learn about being reconcilers in a society increasingly characterised by cultural division and conflict? How can we pray, act and speak in these turbulent times?

Christians in Ukraine and Israel Palestine have approached this question in different ways, which will in turn help shape our understanding and action in our own contexts.

This significant day conference is hosted by the British Trust for Tanur, which supports the work of the Tanur Ecumenical institute, on the border between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. We will be welcoming their Rector, Fr. John Paul SJ, along with guests from Ukraine, to lead us in our reflection.

This conference will run from 10.00 – 3.30pm at Coventry Cathedral, a community known for its commitment to reconciliation, and as a place to reflect and respond to these difficult questions. Tickets are now £15 (or £10 for concessions, e.g. ordinands, students). For more information and to book your place visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/wh674s7c>

Being Seen: In Art, Words and Dance: Including exhibition by Andy Farr

Saturday, 18th October, 2pm - 4pm

A thought-provoking public event and exhibition inspired by testimonies of growth and recovery from trauma. Coventry Cathedral invites you to experience *Being Seen: In Art, Words and Dance* — a moving exhibition and live performance event that brings together visual art, lived experience, dance, poetry, and testimony. Inspired by real stories of trauma and transformation, this project offers a deeply human look at resilience, compassion, and hope.

Choir Talent Show

Sunday, 19th October, following the service.

Join us for a joyful afternoon as our Cathedral Choristers share their gifts beyond the usual repertoire in order to raise money for their choir activities! The show will happen straight after the morning service and comes with a light lunch. It'll be a wonderful occasion of music, laughter, and surprises.

Please come along and show your support for our choristers – your presence will mean a great deal to them. Tickets are £10 and may be purchased with cash or card on the day.

BIRD - Part of the Action Rayz Film Series

Thursday, 23rd October

7pm - Pay as you feel on the Chapter House door

Bailey lives with her brother Hunter and her father Bug, who raises them alone in a squat in northern Kent. Bug doesn't have much time to devote to them. Bailey looks for attention and adventure elsewhere.

Rating: 15

24 Hours of Prayer for Peace

Saturday, 1st November

We are launching our Coventry Cathedral Reconciliation Season with 24 hours of prayer for peace from 9.30am on Saturday 1st November all the way through to 9.30am on Sunday 2nd November. There will be different acts of prayer and worship throughout the 24 hours, as well as some prayer stations and other prayer resources. We would love members of the cathedral community to volunteer to lead either create or offer a prayer resources, to help steward overnight and most of all, to commit to praying for part of the 24 hours (either in the building or at home). If you are able to help with this, please contact Kate (Kate.massey@coventry.anglican.org)