

Choral Evensong

Sunday 10th December

The Second Sunday of Advent



Welcome to this service of Choral Evensong, led by the Reverend Mary Gregory, Canon for Arts and Reconciliation. The Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry, will be preaching.

The Choir is directed by Rachel Mahon, Director of Music. The organists are Luke Fitzgerald, Assistant Director of Music, and Stephen Crookes, Organ Scholar.

The Responses are by Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988).

The full text of the service is found in the purple booklets. Bibles are available if you wish to follow the psalms and lessons: please ask a welcomer if you would like one.

The Introit

O Radiant Dawn,

Splendour of eternal Light,

Sun of Justice:

Come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

Isaiah had prophesied,

‘The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone’. Amen.

*Great ‘O’ antiphon for 21 December
Music by James Macmillan (b. 1959)*

Psalm 40

1. I waited patiently for the Lord: and he inclined unto me, and heard my calling.

2. He brought me also out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay: and set my feet upon the rock, and ordered my goings.

3. And he hath put a new song in my mouth: even a thanksgiving unto our God.

4. Many shall see it, and fear: and shall put their trust in the Lord.

5. Blessed is the man that hath set his hope in the Lord: and turned not unto the proud, and to such as go about with lies.

6. O Lord my God, great are the wondrous works which thou hast done, like as be also thy thoughts which are to us-ward: and yet there is no man that ordereth them unto thee.
7. If I should declare them, and speak of them: they should be more than I am able to express.
8. Sacrifice and meat-offering thou wouldest not: but mine ears hast thou opened.
9. Burnt-offerings, and sacrifice for sin, hast thou not required: then said I, Lo, I come,
10. In the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should fulfil thy will, O my God: I am content to do it; yea, thy law is within my heart.
11. I have declared thy righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, and that thou knowest.
12. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart: my talk hath been of thy truth and of thy salvation.
13. I have not kept back thy loving mercy and truth: from the great congregation.
14. Withdraw not thou thy mercy from me, O Lord: let thy loving-kindness and thy truth alway preserve me.
15. For innumerable troubles are come about me; my sins have taken such hold upon me that I am not able to look up: yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart hath failed me.
16. O Lord, let it be thy pleasure to deliver me: make haste, O Lord, to help me.
17. Let them be ashamed and confounded together, that seek after my soul to destroy it: let them be driven backward and put to rebuke, that wish me evil.
18. Let them be desolate, and rewarded with shame: that say unto me, Fie upon thee, fie upon thee.
19. Let all those that seek thee be joyful and glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say alway, The Lord be praised.
20. As for me, I am poor and needy: but the Lord careth for me.
21. Thou art my helper and redeemer: make no long tarrying, O my God.

The First Lesson | Kings 22:1 - 28

The Magnificat Evening Service in A by Herbert Sumsion
(1899-1995)

The Second Lesson Romans 15:4 - 13

The Nunc Dimittis Evening Service in A by Herbert Sumsion
(1899-1995)

The Collect of the Day

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The Anthem

O thou the central orb of righteous love,
pure beam of the most high, eternal light
of this our wintry world, thy radiance bright
awakes new joy in faith, hope soars above.

Come, quickly come, and let thy glory shine,
gilding our darksome heaven with rays divine;
thy saints with holy lustre round thee move,
as stars about thy throne, set in the height
of God's ordaining counsel, as thy sight
gives measured grace to each, thy power to prove.

Let thy bright beams disperse the gloom of sin,
our nature all shall feel eternal day,
in fellowship with thee, transforming clay
to souls erewhile unclean, now pure within. Amen.

Words by H.R. Bramley (1833-1917)
Music by Charles Wood (1866-1926)

The Hymn

The people that in darkness sat
a glorious light have seen;
the light has shined on them who long
in shades of death have been.

To hail thee, Sun of Righteousness,
the gathering nations come;
they joy as when the reapers bear
their harvest treasures home.

For thou their burden doest remove,
and break the tyrant's rod,
as in the day when Midian fell
before the sword of God.

For unto us a child is born,
to us a Son is given,
and on his shoulder ever rests
all power in earth and heaven.

His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
the everlasting Lord,
the Wonderful, the Counsellor,
the God by all adored.

His righteous government and power
shall over all extend;
on judgement and on justice based,
his reign shall have no end.

Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray,
and make us thine alone,
who with the Father ever art
and Holy Spirit One.

Isaiah 9.2-7 as in Scottish Paraphrases (1791)

arranged by John Morrison (1750-1798)

Tune CP 38 Dundee melody from the Scottish Psalter (1615)

as set in Ravenscroft's Psalter (1621)

Voluntary

Please do stay for the organ voluntary, performed today by
Luke Fitzgerald, Assistant Director of Music.

Fantasia on Veni Emmanuel by Alec Rowley (1892-1958)

*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.*



We serve refreshments at the back of the Nave after this service, so please feel free to stay for a chat over a cup of tea or coffee!

Daily Services at the Cathedral:

The following are services that always take place at these days and times at the Cathedral. 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

8:30 – 8:50am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*
12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*
4 – 4:30pm: *Evening Prayer*

Tuesday

8:30 – 8:50am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*
12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*
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Wednesday

8:30 – 8:50am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*
12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*
5:15 – 6pm: *Choral Evensong*

Thursday

8:30 – 8:50am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*
12 – 12:40pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation & BCP Holy Communion*
5:15 – 6pm: *Choral Evensong*

Friday

8:30 – 8:50am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*
12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*
4 – 4:30pm: *Evening Prayer*

Saturday

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

Sunday

10:30 – 11:45am: *The Cathedral Eucharist*
4 – 5pm: *Choral Evensong*

COMMUNITY NEWS

Winter programme: services and events

This is now available to pick up from the back of the Cathedral with details of all our services and events throughout December. Please do take one home today.

The conflict in Israel/Palestine

For measured, prayerful, up-to-date information on the conflict in Israel/Palestine, you might like to regularly check the Embrace website - <https://embraceme.org/>. As you will know, the Reverend Su McClellan works for Embrace, and she would be very glad to engage with you in conversation about your questions and concerns on this conflict and how we might respond. Please continue to pray for her at this challenging and distressing time, and of course continue to pray for all those suffering as a result of the conflict.

Becoming a net zero Cathedral

We are committing to working towards becoming a 'net zero' Cathedral – that is, reducing and offsetting our generation of greenhouse gas so that our net impact on the planet's atmosphere is 'zero'. You might imagine that this is a challenging and complex process and will mean that we need to pay attention to our buildings – to how we generate energy and then how energy efficient we are; to how we travel to and from our buildings; to how we live our lives together – how much we recycle, how much we reuse, and so on.

This is something that we hope to explore in St Michael's Committee. We would also love to hear from anyone who would like to have a voice in this process, perhaps as a 'net zero champion'. If you'd be interested in exploring this, please contact Simon Danks, our Chief Operating Officer:

Simon.Danks@coventry.anglican.org

Live-streaming

It's been agreed that whilst we will continue to livestream Morning Prayer and Holy Communion, and the daily Litany, we will not, at least for the time being, stream any other services. We have not arrived at this decision lightly, but have taken the time to think this through carefully and prayerfully. We know that some people will find this decision difficult, and we are mindful of you. There are several factors that have led us to making this decision, including concerns about how the sound of our musicians, in particular, is transmitted through the live stream. Unfortunately - and this is perhaps related to our sound system, to which we are giving urgent attention - the quality of the transmission of the sound is not what we would wish it to be, and this has a negative impact on the reputation of our wonderful choirs and talented musicians. Live-streaming major services also means that our vergers are taken from the floor of the Cathedral, and from their ceremonial role, and we very much want to recover the vergers' public role in worship.

For these reasons, we have decided to focus our attention on resolving the challenges with the sound system. When the sound in the building itself is excellent, we will then return to the question of whether we resume live-streaming choral services or not.

The suspension of live-streaming Sunday and festival services takes effect from 3rd December, Advent Sunday 2023.

Publishing sermons on the website

Partly related to our decision about live-streaming, we are going to begin the practice of publishing our Sunday Eucharist sermons, and other festival sermons, on the website. We hope that this will be welcomed by people who would like to revisit a sermon they've heard in the Cathedral, or by those unable to be present in the Cathedral. Sermons from the Sunday Eucharist service are uploaded here: <https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/worship-music/services>

COMING SOON

BBC Coventry and Warwickshire Carol Service

Monday 11th December, 7pm

BBC's CWR Carol service, recorded here at the Cathedral to be broadcast at Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/events/bbc-coventry-and-warwickshire-carol-service>

Wonder

Wednesday 13th December, 7:30 – 9pm

Join our worship gathering for those curious and imaginative, looking to explore themes of faith through art, dance, and poetry. Wonder takes place every second Wednesday of the month! All are warmly invited to join us.

Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 17th December, 6:30pm

Join us for a candlelit service of traditional Christmas carols and Readings, with beautiful music from our choirs. This is a religious service, so it is free to attend, no booking required. All are welcome!

Handel's 'Messiah' by Candlelight

Monday 18th December, 7 – 10pm

A highlight of the Chorus' season: the performance of Handel's 'Messiah', and this year we are thrilled that this wonderful work is being performed in Coventry Cathedral. Surely there's no better way to prepare for Christmas than through the story of the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The orchestra is Pro Anima and the conductor is our very own Rachel Mahon, Director of Music at Coventry Cathedral.

Doors will open at 6pm.

For more information and to book tickets, please visit:

<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/events/handels-messiah-by-candlelight>

Britten's Ceremony of Carols

Thursday 21st December, 5:30pm

The Cathedral Choristers perform Benjamin Britten's perennial Christmas favourite 'A Ceremony of Carols' with harpist Cecily Beer. Composed in 1942, this is a twenty-minute, eleven-movement work scored for 3-part treble choir, soloists and harp. This meditative performance begins at 5.30pm, and entry is free.

Donations towards the musical ministry of Coventry Cathedral are greatly appreciated.

Eucharist Service for the Longest Night

Thursday 21st December, 7 – 8pm

We know that it can sometimes be hard to feel joyful at Christmas. This service is formed with care, made especially for those who might be struggling, particularly around this time of the year.

La Nativité du Seigneur

Saturday 23rd December, 4 – 5pm

Rachel Mahon and Luke Fitzgerald present one of the greatest organ works of all time, Olivier Messiaen's festive masterpiece 'La Nativité du Seigneur', with reflective readings selected by Canon Mary Gregory.

This service is free to attend and does not require any booking. For more information, please visit: <https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/services/one/la-nativite%C3%A9-du-seigneur>

Carols for Families

Sunday 24th December, 2:30pm

A fun, interactive retelling of the Christmas story with singalong carols. A lighter take on Christmas, and everyone is welcome! Children might like to come dressed as a character from the nativity. Adults might want to wear their jazziest Christmas jumper! This service is free to attend and no booking is required.

The Form of a Servant

Sunday 24th December, 7pm

A service unique to Coventry Cathedral, The Form of a Servant explores why Jesus was born; how He was born to serve and to save humanity. This candlelit service is full of beautiful music, powerful readings and profound symbolism. For more information, please visit: <https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/services/one/form-of-a-servant>

Christmas Day Eucharist Service

Monday 25th December, 10:30 – 11:45am

Join us for a Eucharist service on Christmas Day. This is a wonderful way to start this special day – or continue it, if you've been up since 4am!